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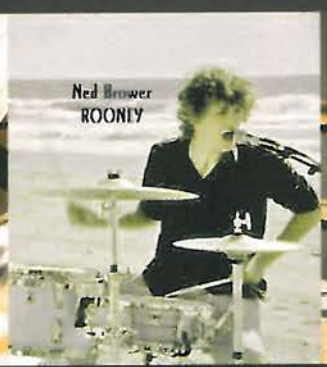

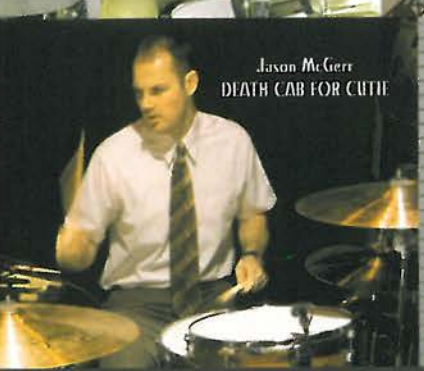

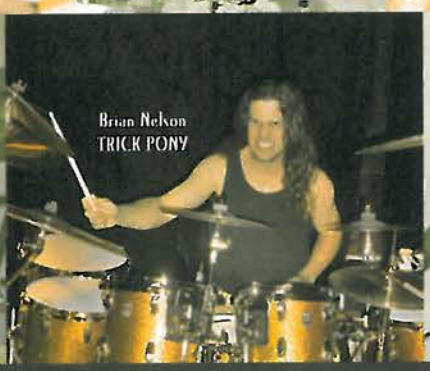

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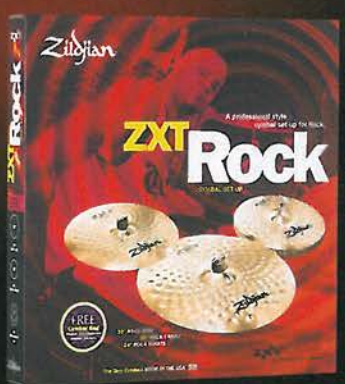

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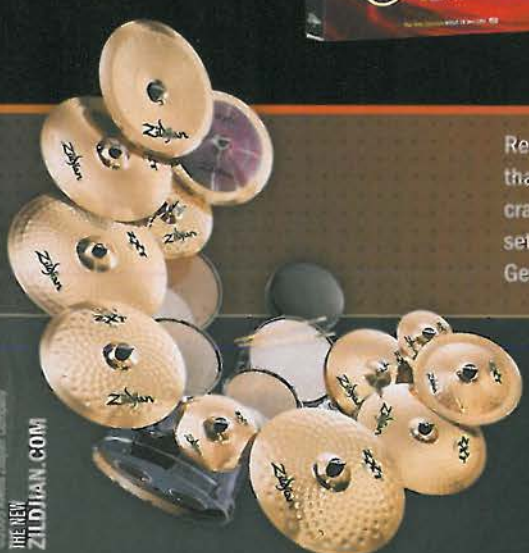

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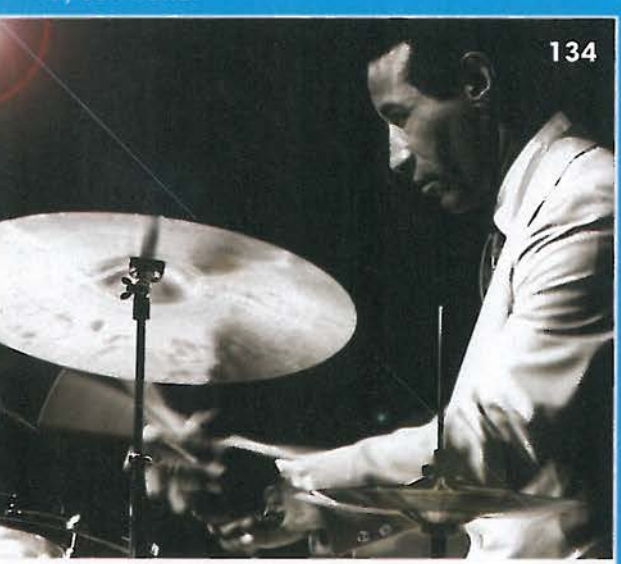

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Omar Hakim in the studio with Reference Series. Shown in #193 Purple Craze

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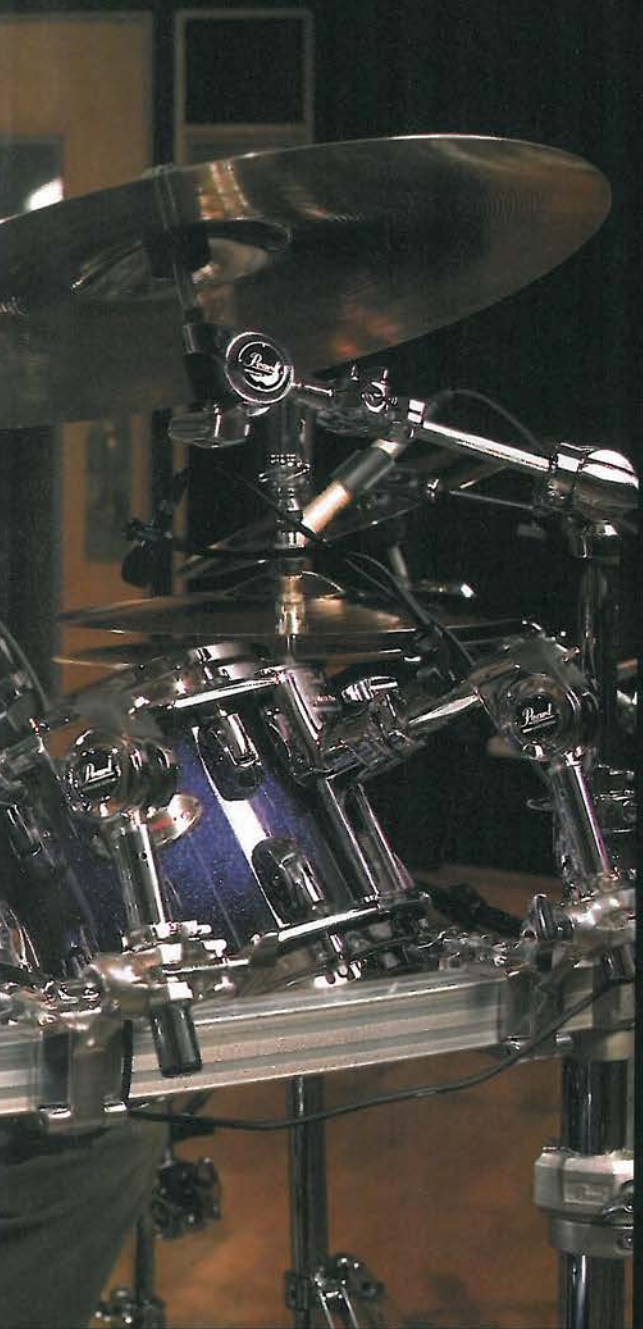

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Taking The Reins

At *Modern Drummer*, we've always tried to break down the barriers between you—our readers—and the drummers you learn about every month in the magazine. This is particularly true for the *Critique* department. Alongside marquee rock stars and legendary jazz players, almost every month you'll read equally serious reviews of decidedly non-famous players with albums on independent labels. Our rule has always been simple: As long as an album is readily available, if it's something we think our readers should hear about, we'll review it.

In this age of home studios and DiscMakers, however, the number of independent releases we're asked to consider has skyrocketed. So in an effort to spread the word about even more of the noteworthy albums we come across each month, we've created a new section of *Critique* called Taking The Reins.

Rather than full-length reviews, Taking The Reins simply includes artist names, album titles, and Web addresses. To make this section more relevent to *MD* readers, we're limiting our coverage to hot *drummer*-led releases. This could mean a solo drum performance, a collection of drum duets, or even a big band album led by a drummer. This doesn't include groups whose drummers are one of several contributing musicians. We have to draw the line somewhere, after all. And besides, we like the idea of giving special props to drummers who go beyond tradition, and, well, take the reins.

Now, we're going to be strict about the Web site thing. For this new service to work, readers must be able to quickly find out more about an album—and in 2005, that means some sort of Web presence. This could be the drummer's own site, a record company site, or a Web retailing service like CDBaby.com. And if readers can hear clips once they arrive at the site, and order online, all the better.

To be clear, the introduction of Taking The Reins doesn't mean *MD* won't continue running full reviews of below-the-radar albums in the future. To the contrary, we'll still be the first to tell you when some single-minded drummer from South Dakota comes out with a killer album performed solely on RotoToms and tuned cowbells. Taking The Reins just gives you the opportunity to hear about even *more* inspired drummer-led releases.

So, here's to all you drummer-leaders out there. We look forward to hearing your latest works.

Adam Budofsky

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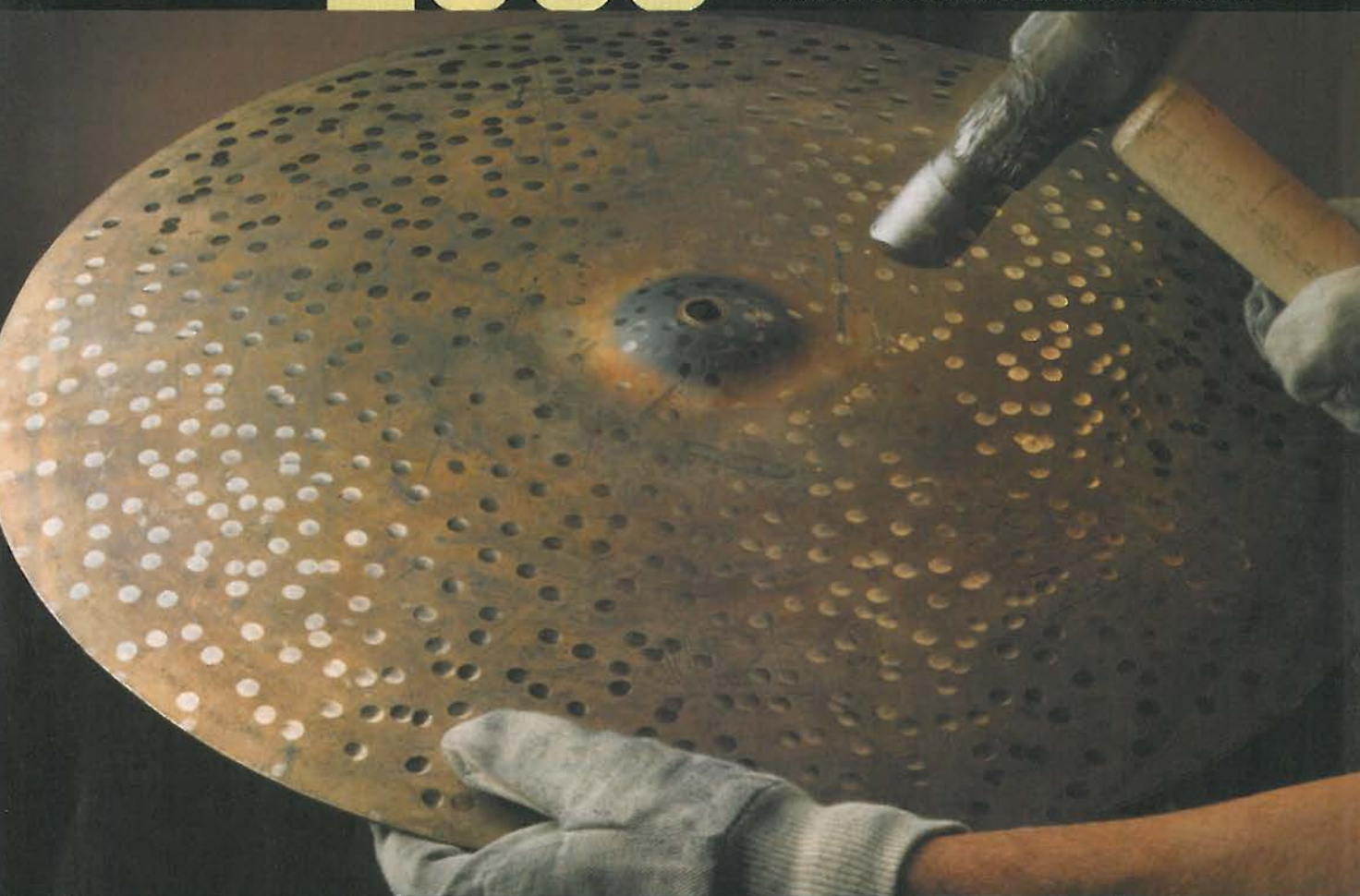

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?UESTLOVE AND VRENNA

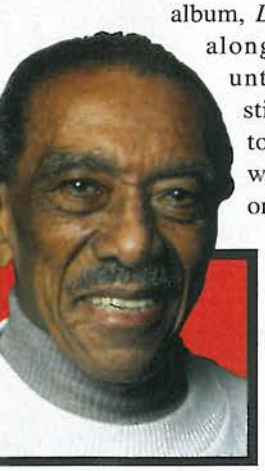
Your March issue is like a dream come true for a drummer like me, who's exploring the engineering/producing route. First you present the incredible cover story on Ahmir "?uestlove" Thompson. Then you have Chris Vrenna's article on home recording. Wow! Once again, *Modern Drummer* proves it's not only the best drumming magazine out there, but the best magazine, period.

James M. Lucas

EARL PALMER

Thanks for the March story on Earl Palmer. I've been wondering for years what he's been doing.

My first experience with Earl was in the late 1950s. I was just starting to play drums, and I came across his solo album, *Drumsville*. I played along with that record until I wore it out. I still play Earl's intro to "One Mint Julep" when I can slip it in on my gigs.



In the 1980s I was president of the Tucson, Arizona musicians union. Earl was the treasurer of the LA local at that time, and I met him at a conference in Carmel, California. I was in awe, sitting at dinner and talking to Earl. He was a great influence on my playing when I was a young drummer, and he still is today. Thanks, Earl!

John Howe

JOHNNY CARSON AND JAZZ

Johnny Carson, who died this past January, will be remembered as the quintessential talk-show host. But he also used the power of television to further the cause of jazz in general, and of drumming in particular. An amateur drummer himself, Carson was more than a fan. He supported the music and the musicians publicly and privately.

It was Johnny Carson who helped Buddy Rich become a star (again), at a time when the concept of a big band was considered "old hat." Carson featured Buddy and his band on the show in 1966, and it helped them to garner a new audience of all ages. Carson loved Buddy Rich as a person, and worshipped him as a player. In return, Buddy credited Johnny for reviving his career. As thanks, he presented Johnny with a brand-new set of drums.

Many television viewers probably heard jazz for the first time on *The Tonight Show*. Purists contended that Carson's conception of jazz was Dixielanders like Al Hirt and Pete Fountain, along with household names like Duke Ellington, Count Basie, and Louis Armstrong. Few took note of the fact that singer Joe Williams was booked over fifty times, Sarah Vaughan over twenty times, and Dizzy Gillespie at least a dozen times. Max Roach, Miles Davis, Clark Terry, Freddie Hubbard, and The Modern Jazz Quartet each made at least one *Tonight Show* appearance during Johnny Carson's tenure as host. Wynton Marsalis made his first television appearances at Johnny's insistence.

Carson's show was also the last to feature a house orchestra with jazz as its common language. Bandleaders like Carl "Doc" Severinson and Tommy Newsome might have played the stooge on camera, but they staffed the orchestra with the greatest jazz musicians who ever lived. These included resident drummer Ed Shaughnessy, and frequent subs like Louie Bellson, Grady Tate, Butch Miles, and others.

I doubt whether Johnny Carson would have taken credit for his considerable contributions. The record, however, speaks for itself, and many jazz artists would be considerably less successful were it not for him. The jazz world will miss him.

Dr. Bruce H. Klauber

CORRECTIONS FROM RODNEY

I reread my *Jazz Drummers' Workshop* article in the March '05 *MD*, and I found a few mistakes. Sad to say, I believe they were mostly mine.

Blue Mitchell's *The Thing To Do* and *Down With It* are the two records that Al Foster played on (listed as Aloysius Foster). *Snide Remarks* was the title of Bill Stewart's first Blue Note recording, not his first solo recording. His first solo recording was *Think Before You Think*. Sorry for any confusion.

Rodney Green

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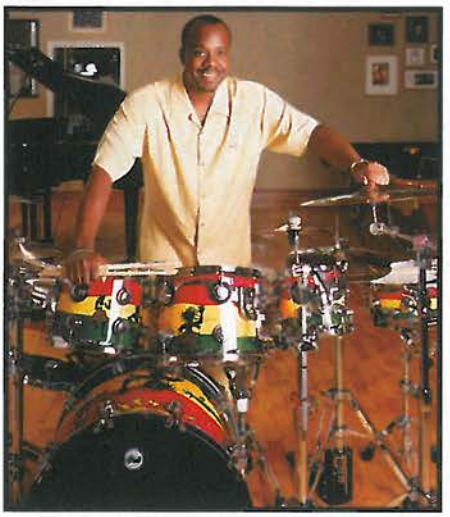
Chuck Morris Update



I was pleasantly surprised to see former Arsenio Hall drummer Chuck Morris in the *Update* section of the March *MD*. I'm glad to see that late-night TV's groove master is still hard at work.

Since reading the article, I purchased a copy of *Standing On A Mountain*. "Phenomenal" is the first word that came to mind. This CD takes a refreshing approach to an otherwise timeless music. To the band's credit, I've rarely heard a tighter outfit on a studio album. And does Chuck ever *groove*. **Tommy D.**

Welcome Back Mr. Garibaldi

For months I've been struggling over whether or not to renew my subscription. Well, coinciding with my final subscription notice from *Modern Drummer*, I got my March issue, announcing the addition of Dave Garibaldi to the instructional staff. You win! My subscription renewal is in the mail. Keep up the good work, and let's have Garibaldi in every issue. **Mike Stackwick**

Dropped Beat

The *New And Notable* item regarding Set-Fast Drumset Anchors on page 148 of the February *MD* incorrectly referred to the prices shown as "list prices." They are, in fact, the manufacturer's already discounted selling price. We apologize for any confusion.

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Maximizing Cymbal Durability

I tend to play pretty hard on the set, and I usually break cymbals in a year or two. For instance, I cracked a Sabian 16" AA Metal-X crash in a little over a year. It's the same story with an 18" Metal-X crash.

This leads me to wonder: What are the most durable cymbals made? Also, do you have any advice on what I could do to make my cymbals last longer? Jon Kenny

Most of the major cymbal manufacturers offer lines or models specifically targeted at hard-hitting drummers. Check their Web sites for their own descriptions of their most durable models. That being said, *no* cymbal is impervious to damage if it is overused or played improperly.

"Overused" refers to using too small a cymbal when trying to get a certain sound. If you're looking for power and projection under heavy stick attack, a 16" of *any* model is likely to be too small for the job. Larger cymbals can usually produce the power you need, while also being a bit more resistant to impact damage.

Playing a cymbal properly involves striking it with a glancing blow from the drumstick in a side-to-side motion, rather than driving the stick directly into the cymbal. Not only does the latter action risk potential damage, it also chokes off the cymbal's ability to respond fully, ironically producing *less* sound.

Angling the cymbals slightly on their stands so that you don't strike them directly on their edges is another way to improve sonic response and durability.

Drum Mic' Positioning

I just purchased one Shure SM81 and two KSM27 mic's to use live and in the studio. My questions are about placement and setting up the mic's. Should I use the 81 directly on my hi-hats and the 27s overhead, or should I set the 27s closer to the toms and put the 81 overhead?

The mic's all have low-end roll-offs and a -15 dB attenuation setting. How should these be set to achieve a nice, natural sound? If it helps to answer the questions, I'll be running the mic's through a Yamaha 01V mixer.

Chris Hankins

We asked Shure regional and artist relations manager Ryan Smith to address your questions. He responds, "First of all, thank you for your purchase of our products. The KSM27 is a very versatile microphone currently being used on toms and for overheads on plenty of stages. I've also seen it used on toms for studio recording. Meanwhile, the SM81 is equally well suited as a hi-hat or overhead mic'.

"As far as placement of the SM81 and KSM27s goes, I suggest that you experiment with different positions and see which brings you the best blend. Personally, I would place the SM81 on the hi-hat. I'd put one KSM27 over the top of a single rack tom, or above and between them if you have two. I'd mount the other one on a short stand by the floor tom, aimed toward the ride cymbal. That should give you a nice blend of both your toms and cymbals.

"As for the pads and roll-offs, use these only when necessary. If the incoming mic' signal is overdriving the board, use the -15 dB pad. If you're experiencing a minor amount of undesired low end that you can't eliminate through EQ at the board, use the gentle roll-off. If there's way too much low end, use the steep roll-off. I hope these suggestions help you."

"Second Line" Drumming

I hear the term "second line drumming" talked about a lot. I've never been able to figure out what it refers to. Can you explain the term?

Ron Aldstadt

"Second line" refers to a style of music indigenous to New Orleans. It has been played at funerals by small, primarily African-American marching bands over the past several generations. On their way *to* a funeral, they play slow, somber music. That's the "first line." But on their way *back*, they play joyous, loose, fairly funky music, and that's the "second line."

In terms of drumset playing within pop or R&B music, a "second line influence" usually involves a certain amount of rudimental snare drum playing (including lots of press rolls), with the bass drum often playing backbeats or syncopated patterns (as opposed to standard downbeats). This is in emulation of the separate snare and bass drummers in the marching funeral bands.

For great examples of second line drumming as applied to the drumset, listen to Johnny Vidacovich, Herlin Riley, Stanton Moore, or any of the other great drummers from New Orleans. A great place to start is the *New Orleans Drumming* DVD from Warner Bros. It's a compilation of three previously separate video titles featuring Herlin Riley, Johnny Vidacovich, Herman Ernest, and Earl Palmer.

Questions For MD's Drum Experts?

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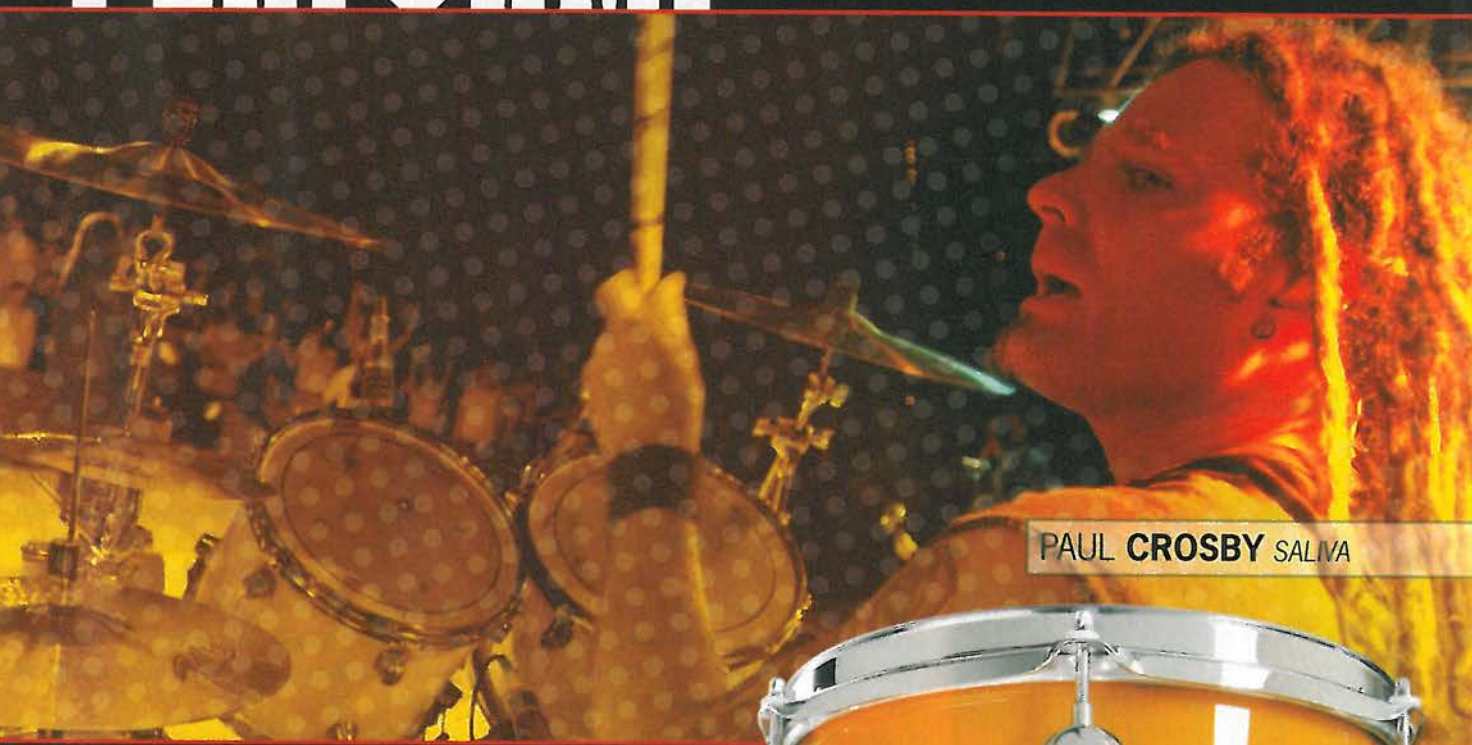

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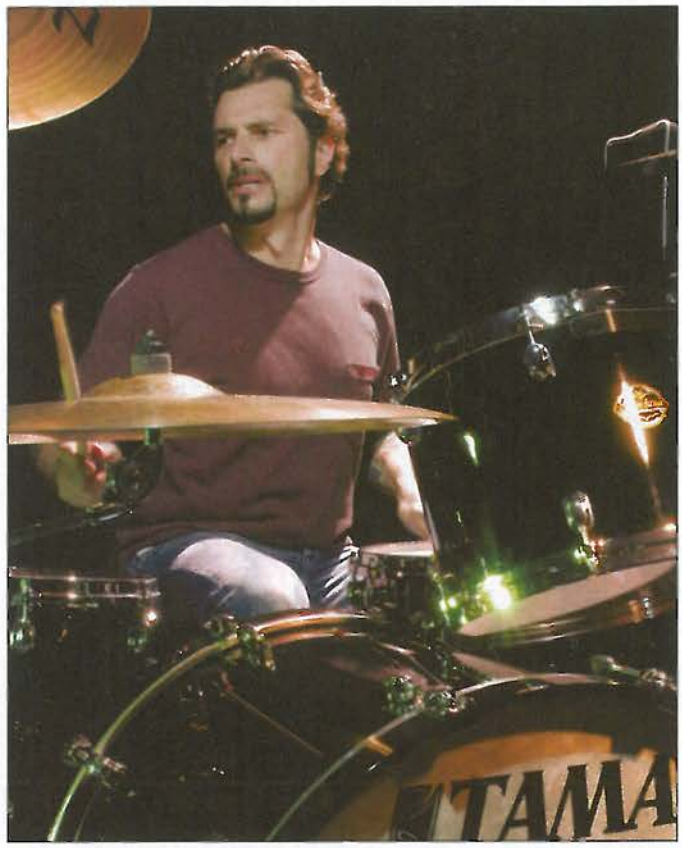

Q First of all, the new Helmet album rocks! Second, when you played Tampa, Florida with Rob Zombie a few years back, you were kind enough to spend time talking with me after your set. I want to offer my much-belated thanks.

Here's my question: In your December '04 *MD* feature, the equipment list mentioned a 7x14 "prototype" snare drum. A few pages later, a Tama add shows you with what looks like a black metal drum with a brushed finish. Is this a new production drum, a one-off, or perhaps a "John Tempesta signature" drum? I'm very curious, since I'm a huge fan of deep metal snares. **F. DeLuna**

A Thanks for the kind words. That snare drum will be my signature model. It's a 7x14 brass-shell drum with a black brushed-nickel finish. Its 2 mil–thick shell is similar to that of a Bell Brass drum. It sounds like a monster! We hope to have it out a little later this year.

Simon Phillips
On Setups And Open-Hand Lead

Q You're one of the drummers that I respect and listen to the most. Your eclectic playing and open-handed technique have inspired me to the utmost. I also love your signature *deep* tom sounds. I have two questions for you. First: My favorite groove of yours is 1977's "Diamonds & Rust," from Judas Priest's 1977 *Sin After Sin* album. It showcases all of your trademark sounds and techniques. What setup did you use for that track?

Second, I'm trying to teach myself the open-handed technique. I've been closely watching you on Toto's *Live In Amsterdam* DVD. Do you have any advice for developing smoother open-handed playing? **Brian Jezuit**

A Thank you for your kind comments. I used my old Ludwig Octaplus on the Priest sessions, with two 22" kicks and 6" through 18" toms. I'm not sure which snare I used, but it was probably a $6\frac{1}{2}$x14 Rogers Dyna-Sonic. The cymbals were Zildjians. We recorded at Ramport Studios in Battersea—The Who's old studio. All the tracks were played live with Glen Tipton [guitarist], Ian Hill [bassist], Rob Halford [vocalist], and me. KK Downing [guitarist] was in the control room with producer Roger Glover. Those were the days!

As far as open-handed playing goes, it's all down to giving each note its full value. Actually, that applies whether you play open handed or not. It's a matter of *what* you play, and that can only be developed with practice and an awareness of how what you're playing sounds within the music.

It's important to play with even velocity between the left and right hands (and feet). Many times I've heard drummers play a simple 16th-note phrase, and I can tell that one hand is stronger than the other. Lift those sticks off the drums and make them sing!

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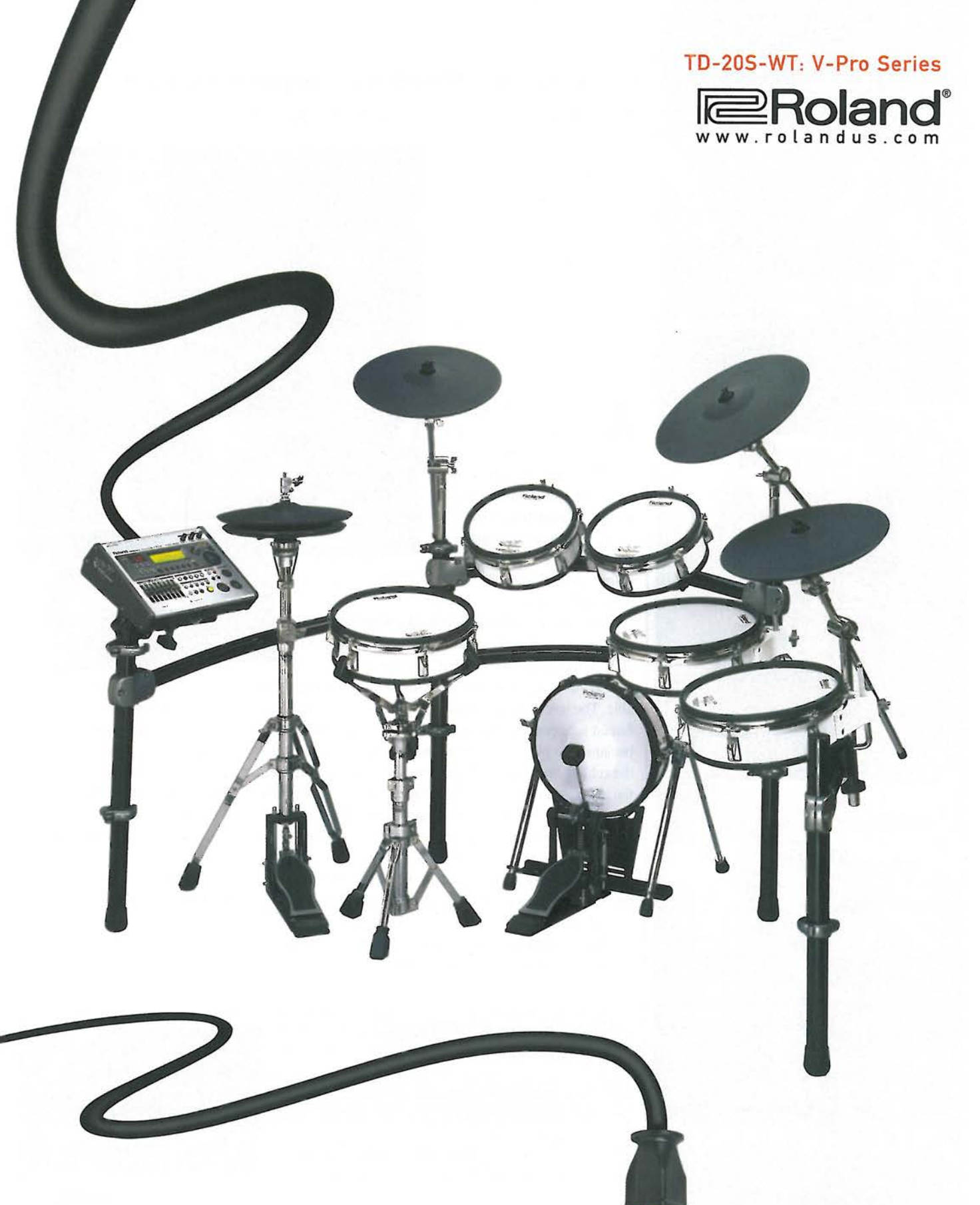

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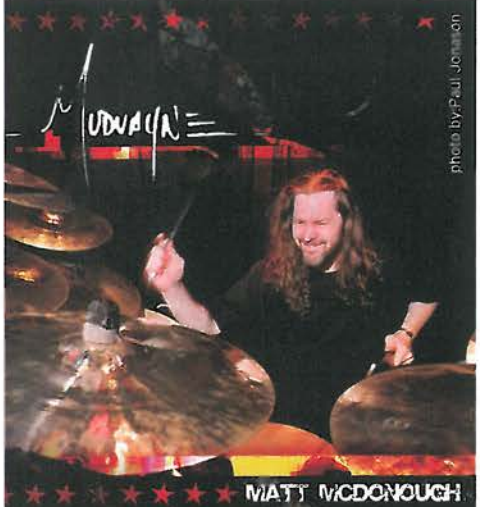

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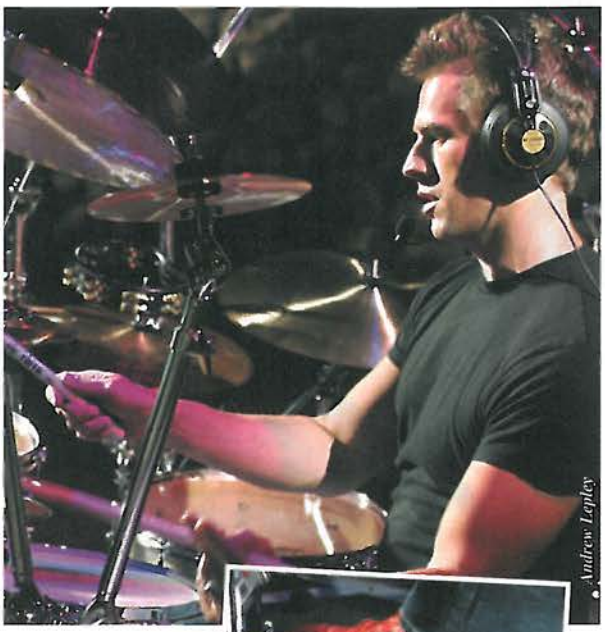
Footwear Fashion Statements From Thomas Lang

Q This question may be a little unusual for *MD*, but here goes: I'm interested in the shoes that you wore on your *Creative Control* DVD. You were photographed in similar shoes in your November '04 *MD* feature story. What are they? They look great, but are they particularly good to play in? **Bob**


Andrew Lepley

A Actually, your question isn't so unusual; I've been getting hundreds of emails along the same lines. The shoes are Puma Speedcat trainers, and they come in many different designs and colors. They're available in select stores, and can also be ordered online at www.puma.com.

There are three things to consider when choosing a drumming shoe: Is it fashionable? Is it comfortable? Can I play drums with it? (In that order!)

The Puma trainers I use were inspired by car-racing shoes. They're light, soft, and comfortable. The sole is made from a thin yet not-too-flexible non-slip rubber material. The heel is reinforced for operating the pedals in a racing car. That makes this trainer a perfect choice for me, because I'm playing Sonor Twin-Effect pedals with both my heel and my toe. The thickness of the rubber heel reinforcement provides shock-absorption for when I stomp heavily down onto the pedal, but is thin enough for me to still feel the reaction and mechanics of my pedals.

In terms of looks, I wear whatever color suits the rest of my outfit best. I like using the red shoes for clinics because they're a real focal point for the viewers. I wore them on the DVD to visually accent my pedal work.

Even after all the consideration I've given to footwear, I still have to say that, in the end, the shoe is not important. It's the *foot* that matters, because it's what does all the work. I've played shows barefoot, as well as wearing everything from flip-flops to dress shoes to clogs. It's like playing on a different pedal or playing with someone else's sticks: You should still be able to play well, no matter what.

Repeat Bar

A Classic Quote From MD's Past

"You know when something is swinging and when it isn't. Although you *can* start to question yourself: 'Is this *really* swinging?'" When that happens, you're in trouble."

Galactic's **Stanton Moore**, August 2000

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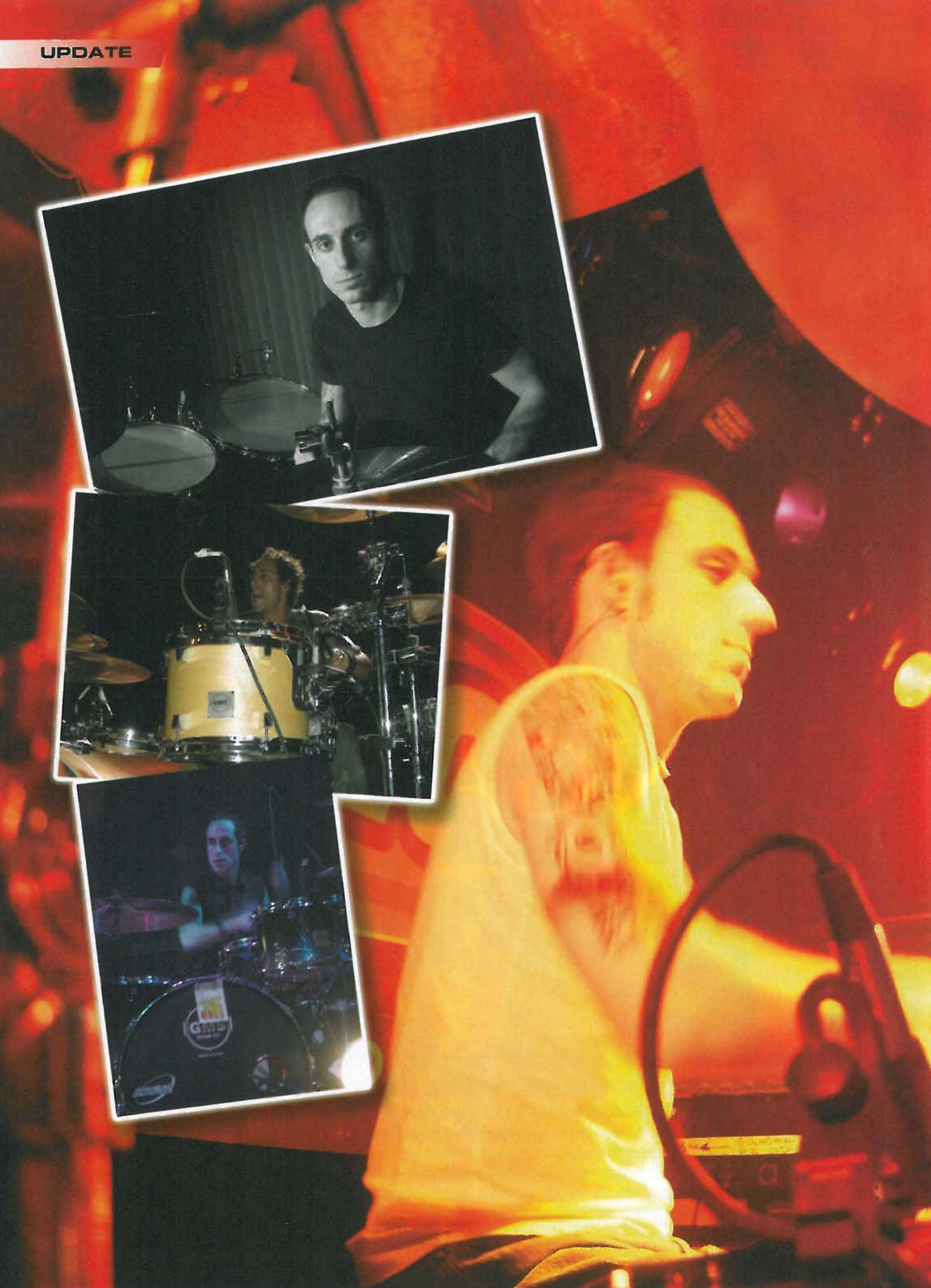
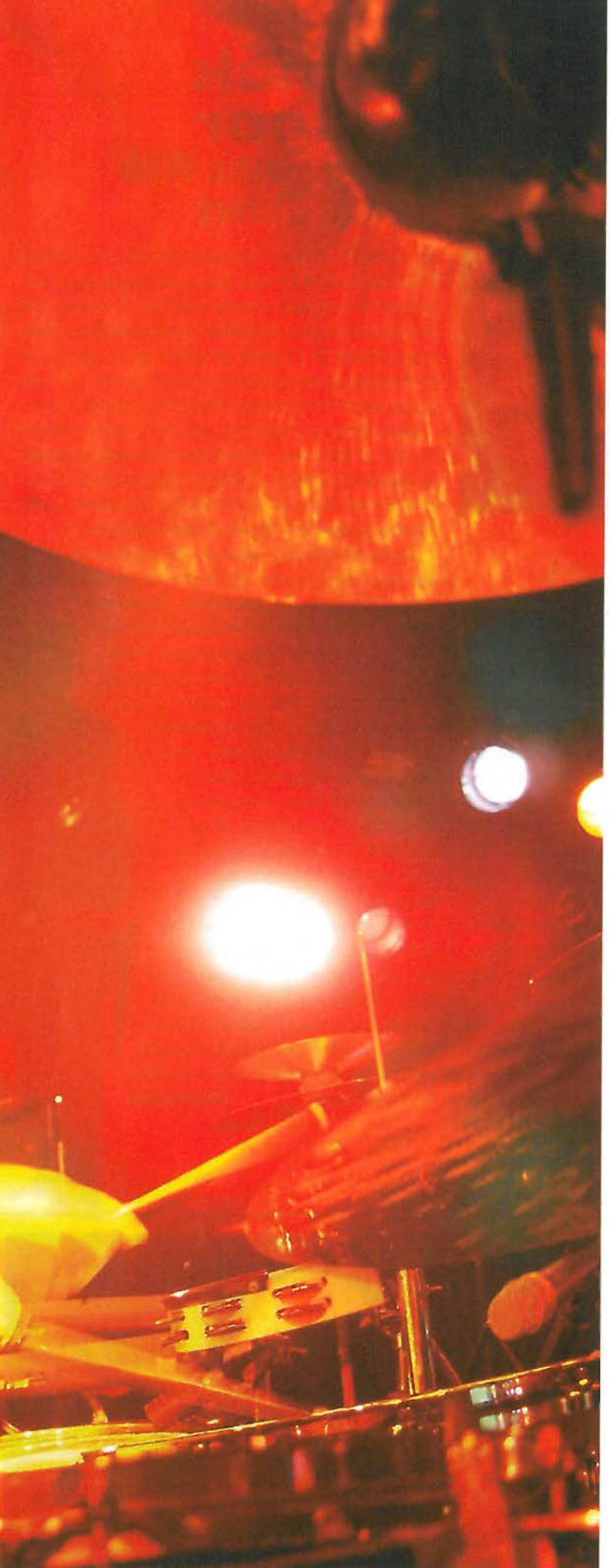




THESTART'S Frank Zummo

More Bang! For His Buck

Frank Zummo might've had what some would consider a dream gig. After all, the New York native had spent three years in one of the East Coast's biggest cover bands, with a road crew at his disposal, jetting to and from gigs, plus raking in an excellent income. Yet, when Zummo was invited to become a full-time member of the band, he said no. "I didn't start playing drums to play other people's music," he says.

Instead Zummo made his way west to Los Angeles. Now, if he sounds like he kissed away the career of a lifetime, there's no way you could tell by the smile on his face when he speaks about what he's been doing lately.

Today Zummo is the drummer of new wave/punk act theStart, and though he's lugging his own equipment, driving a full-size van on long stretches across the country, and slamming through blistering sets, things couldn't be better. That's because Zummo has already expanded his opportunities through an all-percussion ensemble known as Bang!

The idea of Bang! isn't anything new to Zummo. Years before, the drummer had auditioned for Stomp, and he'd even performed in similar all-percussion outfits at theme parks. After meeting brothers Adam and Bobby Alt upon his move to LA and learning that they had also been involved in percussion ensembles, the trio decided to launch a new company.

"We went to downtown Los Angeles, drove around, and said, Let's just find a location to jam," Zummo recalls. "There were junked cars, so we rolled tape and just jammed for about an hour. Then we edited that tape down to five minutes, and I sent it out to all my theme-park and Las Vegas contacts." Six Flags Magic Mountain called back, and Bang! was hired to play the park all summer last year. "The response at the shows was *amazing*," Zummo recalls. "It was like a rock concert at every gig."

The drummers recently took things a step further with Bang!, headlining a sold-out show in Anaheim, California with guests like Brooks Wackerman and Adrian Young jamming along. "Kids went nuts," Zummo says. "Everything couldn't have gone better. I've got a good team around me. It's just amazing."

For more information on all things Zummo, check out www.streetdrumcorps.com, www.thisisthestart.com, and www.myspace.com/bang. **Waleed Rashidi**

T. Bruce Wittet

JAZZ MASTER

Jon Christensen

A Beat Is Not Always What You Think It Is

The title of this piece is a cryptic warning that appears in the liner notes of *Jon Christensen: Selected Recordings*, a recent tribute CD on ECM's Rarum series. Over the past thirty years, the Norwegian drummer has played drums and percussion on fifty-five releases from the esteemed German jazz label.

Jon elaborates on beats: "You could go to a jazz club Tuesday at 8:00 and play just one tap on the cymbal, then come back to the club exactly one week later and play one more cymbal hit. People would think the two events have nothing in common. But *that* is a beat."

Well, that might not wash in Nashville, but it's certainly worked its magic for a host of ECM artists. "If I'm playing with a band in 4/4 in a medium tempo," Jon explains, "and I feel like loosening up a bit, I could go out of tempo or stop altogether—but I always know *exactly* where I am. I'm not just marking the 1 or setting up the bridge with a fill. I always try to avoid that. Instead, I try to play in waves."

Although Christensen can play straight time with the best of 'em—always on a brutally heavy old Turkish K—he'd rather mix it up a little. You hear Jon's diverse approaches on his ECM Rarum release, eloquent testimony to his status as a master of modern jazz drumming. Other Rarum honorees include Chick Corea, Jack DeJohnette, Pat Metheny, Dave Holland, Gary Burton, Keith Jarrett, and Bill Frisell.

Last year Christensen turned sixty. This year he's touring with a guitarist half his age, Jacob Young. Over the decades, Jon intimates, "I've always been hired to play like I play. I've been playing 'Jon Christensen' all the way. Journalists began writing that I was this innovative drummer and that people from Japan and Europe had begun trying to play like me. Only then did I figure out, Hmmm, maybe I've done something different after all."

T. Bruce Wittet

Patrick Seacor

Cutting Elastic With Scissor Sisters

As a child, Patrick Seacor fashioned curtain rods into drumsticks and the family couch into a drumset, imitating Blondie's Clem Burke as the band played *Saturday Night Live*. In December, the same week Seacor (a.k.a. Paddy Boom) and his band Scissor Sisters were nominated for a Grammy, he played *SNL* for real. "It's an insane moment to have your dreams come true," he says. "I've really paid my dues. It didn't come easy. I have a career doing what I love."

Before landing the Scissor Sisters gig in 2003, Seacor worked in New York for fifteen years, hopping around local bands and backing stars such as Fred Schneider of The B-52's and Joe Jackson. He also formed his own record label (Boom Boom Records) and even accompanied dance classes with African and Brazilian percussion.

"The African stuff helped me learn a new vocabulary that little by little seeped into my playing," says Seacor, who has twice attended two-month percussion workshops in Africa. "It's something I keep with me. And sometimes I get a chance to utilize it."

So how does African percussion relate to Scissor Sisters' unavoidably danceable self-titled debut and the international hit, "Take Your Mama"? "A lot of African music is about dancing, and expressing all the aspects of life through music. Scissor Sisters is about putting a feeling across."

Recording the album, Seacor gave up many of the artistic freedoms he was accustomed to in the studio. Much of the album was done with computer beats and loops of his playing, and he does not appear on all tracks. And Seacor feels similar constraints during live shows, playing to a click track with little room for improvisation. But keeping the music fresh has not been a point of contention, and he says he enjoys the band too much to let it bother him. "The cool thing about playing drums is the elasticity. That's what keeps me excited every night."

Chris Kornelis

NEWS

Last summer, **Steve Smith** toured with an all-star band called Soulbop, featuring Randy Brecker, Bill Evans, Victor Bailey, David Kikoski, and Hiram Bullock. A double live record from this band was released in February. Steve also went to Mumbai, India to perform at **Zakir Hussain**'s memorial concert for his late father, **Ustad Allah Rakha**. Steve has been studying Indian rhythms for some time and has even been doing some touring with Zakir in a band called Summit. Vital Information's *Come On In* is currently out as well. The band recently toured the US and Europe.

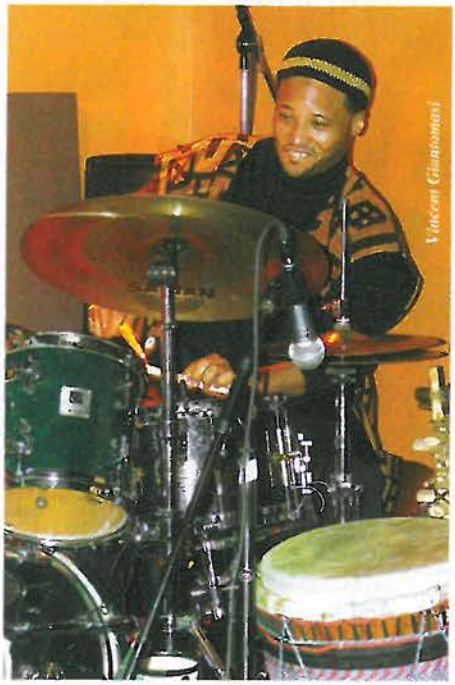
In Summer 2005, Steve will be touring with a Steps Ahead reunion, featuring Michael Brecker, Mike Stern, Richard Bona, and Mike Mainieri, and he can be heard on two tracks on the new Andrea Bocelli recording, *Andrea*.

Steve was also on hand when Journey received its star on Hollywood Boulevard in January of this year. That night, various Journey alumni convened at the House Of Blues and Steve sat in on a few tunes, as did original Journey drummer **Aynsley Dunbar** and current drummer **Deen Castronovo**.

Jeffrey Mayer

Winard Harper

Coming Into The Light



The Savant label has recently released Winard Harper's *Come Into The Light*. The CD was recorded live at Cecil's, a jazz nightclub owned by drummer/producer Cecil Brooks III in New Jersey. Not since Art Blakey & The Jazz Messengers has there been as exciting a group in jazz as The Winard Harper Sextet. The drummer-led group is one of the hottest acts around.

Harper made his reputation playing with such greats as Dexter Gordon and saxophonist Johnny Griffin. He also spent four years with vocalist Betty Carter, and for a while was a part of the famed Billy Taylor Trio. The foundation of his early work was his collaboration with his brother Philip in The Harper Brothers Band, which received great critical acclaim.

A straight-ahead jazz drummer, Harper has perfected the blend of American jazz music with the sounds of African rhythms. At times, as he performs live and on the new CD, his entire group accompanies him on djembe and other percussion instruments as he solos on the drums. "I feel this is one of the highlights of our performances," the drummer says.

Come Into The Light features Harper's fine sextet, which includes trumpeter Patrick "Face" Rickman, an entertaining showman with unbelievable chops on trumpet and flugelhorn. He's joined by a young genius known for his writing and arranging, Brian Horton, on tenor and soprano saxophone. At the piano, Harper engaged the talents of two keyboard masters, Jeb Patton and Kelvin Sholar, on six tunes apiece. Rounding out the rhythm section is Ameen Saleem on bass and Senegalese percussionist Alioune Faye on djembe and saboor.

The album includes original selections written by Harper (who also plays balafon, an African marimba-like instrument), Rickman, Horton, Saleem, and Patton, plus jazz standards. For more information, go to www.winardharper.com.

Vince Giantomasi

Machine Head's Dave McClain

Building Empires

"He was jumping on my bass drums and yelling at me to play harder," says Machine Head drummer Dave McClain about production wiz Ross Robinson, who produced the metal band's 1999 album *The Burning Red*. "Our guitar player at the time was just standing there quietly during the sessions, so Ross smacked him in the head, the headphones went flying, and Ross yelled, 'Come on!'"

The hard-ass approach paid off, as Robinson inspired the band to forge a mighty metal statement. But even with Robinson's "cheerleading," McClain kept things reasonably low-key. "I wanted to get rid of my drummer's ego and not really show off." And while he pushed the envelope a little more on 2001's *Supercharger*, McClain feels he wasn't exactly a hyperactive monkey on that record either.

Eventually, however, something snapped, and snapped hard. On the band's most recent disc, *Through The Ashes Of Empires*, McClain (who plays a six-piece Pearl Masters Custom kit and Zildjian cymbals) offers some of his most aggressive drumming to date. "I wanted to show off," he admits. "We really got our blood boiling this time."

McClain says he's especially pleased with his drumming on the Rush-like tune "Days Turn Blue To Gray" and the lead-off track "Imperium," which, the drummer says, is "by far my favorite Machine Head song—I'm really proud of the drumming on that one."

Machine Head frontman/guitarist Robb Flynn handled production for *Empires*, and McClain's pounding on "Imperium" was partly inspired by Flynn's tough-guy production style. "It was one of those times when Robb was really pushing me," McClain recalls. "There's some pretty fast double bass work towards the end of the cut. I was really trying to work on my double bass speed, and he was like, 'Come on, you can do it!' And I was like, 'Well, sometimes I can, sometimes I can't.' He kept pushing me to the point where we'd fight. But that song came out killer. It's the kind of drumming I want to do from now on."

Jeff Perlah

Drummer **Jessie Caraballo** is currently part of the percussion trio that is performing with Marc Anthony. Percussionists **Bobby Allende** and **Eric Velez** round out the rhythm section.

Stanton Moore gets all John Bonham/Ian Paice on the new Corrosion Of Conformity disc, *In the Arms Of God*.

Darren Pujalet has been keeping busy touring the US and Europe with Particle, as well as doing tours with **Mickey Hart** and Hydra. Particle will also be supporting Trey Anastasio for a few dates this spring, and will be playing the Bonnaroo festival and *Austin City Limits*.

Mike Mangini is on the Rush tribute album *Subdivisions*.

Brian Young and Fountains Of Wayne recently performed "Bus Stop" as The Hollies on an episode of *American Dreams*. Brian can also be heard on the soundtrack to the feature film *Robots*.

Craig Nunenmacher is on the newly released Black Label Society video, "Suicide Messiah," the first single from their new album, *Mafia*.

John Humphrey has been in the studio with Seether, working on their new album. Check out www.seether.com for more info.

Matt Wilson is on tour with The Matt Wilson Quartet.

Adam Shaw is on tour with Lost City Angels.

Supagroup has recently released its second album, *Rules*, with **Michael Brueggen** on drums.

Dirty Arya is on tour with Skindred.

Fred Beato is on the new 401K release, *Portfolio*.

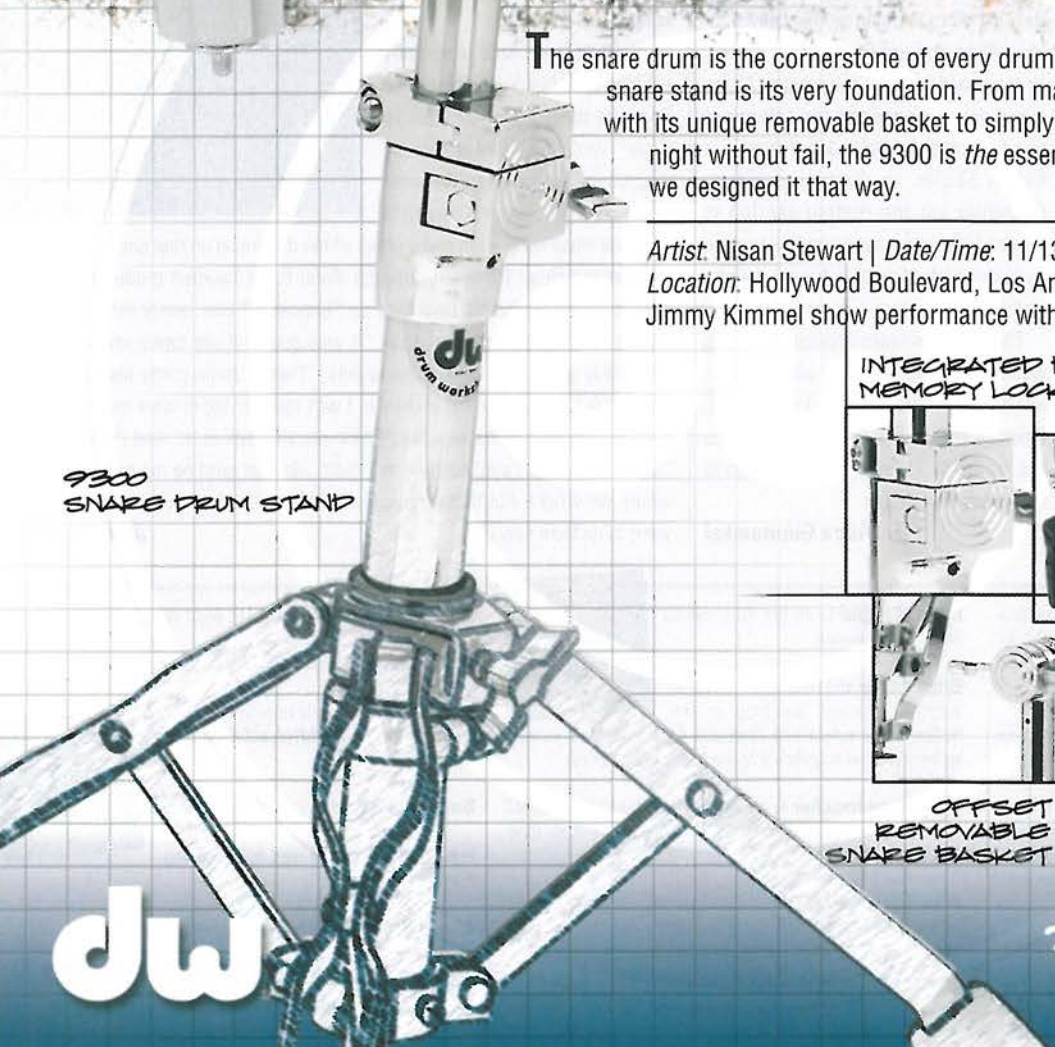
James Branham is on the road with Crossfade.

News continues on page 25

DW BY DESIGN

The snare drum is the cornerstone of every drummer's sound. And quite literally, the snare stand is its very foundation. From making quick snare changes on stage with its unique removable basket to simply performing on the road night after night without fail, the 9300 is *the* essential snare stand. Why? Because we designed it that way.

Artist: Nisan Stewart | *Date/Time*: 11/13/04 15:11:26
Location: Hollywood Boulevard, Los Angeles, California
Jimmy Kimmel show performance with Nelly



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NEWS

Chuck Treece has been doing session work for Busta Rhymes, Sean Paul, Floetry, Fat Joe, and Scott Storch. He recently performed with G Love at the Winter X Games.

Joey Waronker and **Butch** can be heard on some tracks on the new Tracy Bonham release, *Blink The Brightest*. Waronker also co-produced four of the tracks.

Gilad has been performing with his group Trio Del Sol, as well as doing some dates with Mark Murphy. He recently got drafted into the Regina Carter band and will be doing her upcoming tour.

Peter Magadini has been performing with Ted Alan's band and will be doing a spring tour with The Mose Allison Trio.

Rich Redmond is currently on the 2005 George Strait Tour with Amber Dotson. He continues to record and play dates with Jason Aldean and Emily West. For more info check out www.richredmond.com.

For the next several months, you can get an exclusive look into the recording of the new POD record, with **Wuv** on the drums, at www.payableondeath.com.

Australian drummer **Andrew Hewitt** recently did a video shoot for www.drumsallday.com. He's also been working with the band Abilitee. And he recently performed at the Australian Drummers Drumfest at Telstra Stadium in Sydney.

Mark Anders Maigaard is on Louis XIV's *Illegal Tender* EP. Look for their full-length debut coming this spring.

Les Cleveland is doing live dates with Patti La Belle.

Rick Woolstenhulme is on the recent self-titled Lifehouse CD.

Anthony Burulcich is on The Bravery's self-titled CD.

Pete Sandoval is on tour with Morbid Angel, which features a new lineup.

Tommy Aldridge is touring with Ted Nugent.

Tom Brechtlein is on the road with Chick Corea.

Terri Lyne Carrington has been on tour with Herbie Hancock.

Karriem Riggins is touring with Diana Krall.

Raul Pineda is on tour with Chucho Valdes.

Chad Szeliga is touring this spring as a fulltime member of Breaking Benjamin.

In very good news, long-time Molly Hatchet drummer **Bruce Crump** reports that after a long bout with cancer, he is healthy and the cancer is in complete remission. Bruce is now in talks with the original lineup of his former band about reuniting for several shows this spring and summer.

DRUM DATES This month's important events in drumming history

Happy Birthday!

Remo Belli
(Remo drumheads): 6/22/27

Vic Firth
(timpanist): 6/2/30

James Gadson
(R&B great): 6/17/39

Charlie Watts
(Rolling Stones): 6/2/41

Bernard Purdie
(Aretha Frankin, session great): 6/11/41

Mick Fleetwood
(Fleetwood Mac): 6/24/42

Ian Paice
(Deep Purple): 6/29/48

Frank Beard
(ZZ Top): 6/11/49

Joey Kramer
(Aerosmith): 6/21/50

Bun E. Carlos
(Cheap Trick): 6/12/51

Peter Erskine
(jazz great): 6/5/54

Doane Perry
(Jethro Tull): 6/16/54

Charles Collins
(R&B great): 6/21/54

Mickey Curry
(Bryan Adams): 6/10/56

Chad Cromwell
(sessions): 6/14/57

Zoro
(Lenny Kravitz): 6/13/62

Steve Shelley
(Sonic Youth): 6/23/62

Eric Kretz
(Stone Temple Pilots): 6/7/66

Shelly Manne was born on 6/11/20.

Chick Webb passed away on 6/16/39, **Yogi Horton** on 6/8/87, **Tito Puente** on 6/1/00, and **Pistol Allen** on 6/31/02.

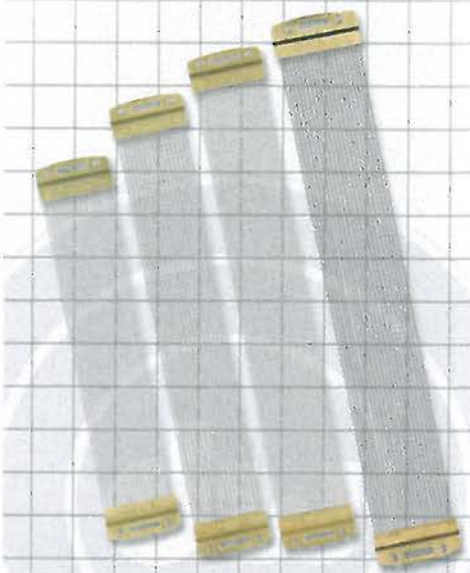
On 6/25/61, The Bill Evans Trio, with bassist Scott LaFaro and drummer **Paul Motian**, record live at the Village Vanguard in New York City.

On 6/7/67, **Tony Williams** begins recording *Nefertiti* with Miles Davis.

Blind Faith (with **Ginger Baker**) makes their debut at a free concert in London's Hyde Park on 6/7/69.

DW BY DESIGN: ACCESSORIES

TRUE-TONE® SNARE WIRES



10, 12, 13 AND 14" TRUE-TONE® WIRES

The snare drum is considered a drummer's unique voice. It's a means of expression that can be customized in countless ways to achieve a variety of sounds. Take snare wires for example. DW True-Tone® snare wires are manufactured to be the strongest, most consistent wires on the market. With their solid brass clips and stainless steel strands, True-Tone® wires are designed to bring out the best in any snare drum. So if your voice isn't everything you want it to be, strap on some True-Tone® wires and listen to your snare drum sing!

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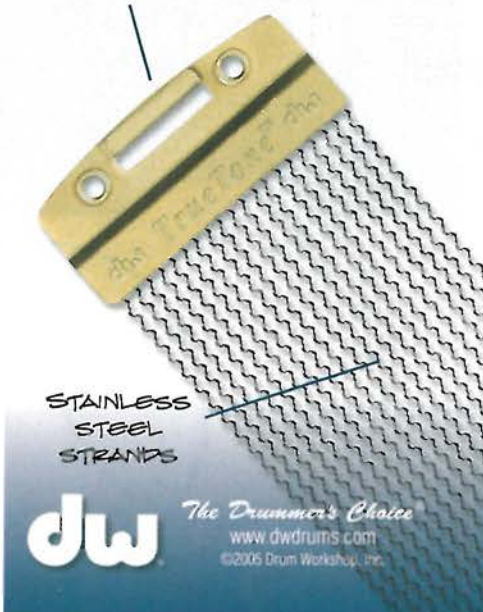

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Sting / Steely
Dan

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Carrington
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Jerry Marotta
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Peter Gabriel

Harvey Mason
Four Play

Herman
Matthews
Tom Jones

Stanton Moore
Galactic

Lewis Nash
Independent /
Lewis Nash
Group

Nigel Olsson
Elton John

Ian Paice
Deep Purple

Johnny Rabb
Independent /
Super Action
Heroes

Walfredo
Reyes, Jr.
Steve Winwood

Walfredo
Reyes, Sr.
Legend

Paul Wertico
Paul Wertico Trio

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Tama Superstar Custom Drums

They're Back...And Brand New

HITS

birch shells with sharp bearing edges

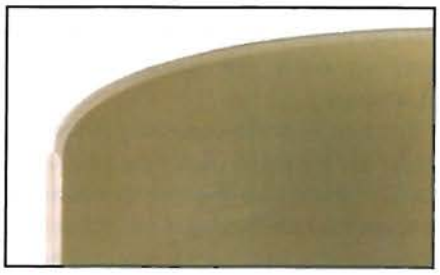
upgraded hardware features

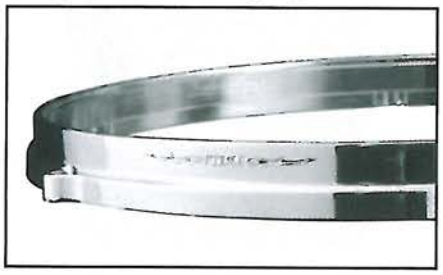
competitive pricing

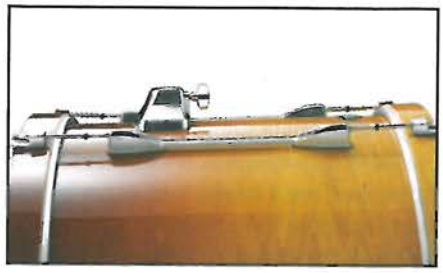
great sound from drumheads

by Kevin D. Osborne

Superstar drums feature birch/basswood shells, die-cast hoops, and new Sound Bridge lugs.







From the late 1970s through the mid-'80s, Tama offered a line of drums called Superstar. They were made of select birch using a special Heat Compression molding system, and were, for a time, Tama's high-end line. Judging from the Internet sites dedicated to those drums, they were, and still are, quite popular.

Well, here's a news flash: Superstars are back. They're not the exact same drums as their '70s/'80s predecessors, which might be an issue for history-oriented purists. But the new Superstars aren't intended to be a resurrection of the previous line. Instead, they're aimed squarely at the entry-level to semi-pro market, which up till now has been addressed by Tama's highly successful Rockstar range. The Rockstar series is to be phased out, but don't let that distress you. The new Superstar line offers serious upgrades over Rockstar models, for a nominal increase in price.

Model Lines

There are three Superstar model lines: Superstar, Superstar EFX, and Superstar Custom. The Superstars come in seven color wraps. Superstar EFX drums are offered in four Duracover finishes, including fancy flame and haze versions. Superstar Customs offer six high-gloss lacquer finishes, including four fades. List prices range from $1,299.99 to $1,549.99. Five basic set configurations are outlined on the Tama Web site, with individual drums available in a wide variety of sizes.

For this review, we received a Superstar Custom kit, with a Custom Ocean Fade finish. The 8x10, 9x12, and 11x14 toms and the 5½x14 snare featured 6-ply, 6 mm–thick shells. The 18x22 bass drum had a 7-ply, 7 mm–thick shell.

Shell Construction

Here is more good news: Birch is back for the Superstars. Tama uses birch for the inner plies, sandwiched between interior and exterior plies of basswood. The company claims that this produces strong projection and an aggressive, open sound. I suspect that it also lends some stiffness to the drum, which allows for a thinner shell. This thin, dense shell holds a nice sharp bearing edge and makes for a more resonant drum.

I'll admit that my first thought was: If you want the properties of birch in a drumset, why hide it inside basswood? Tama's reasoning is that it's the bearing edge, and not the interior ply, that has the most effect on the drum's sound, since the bearing edge is what makes contact with the head. Because the edges of the Superstar drums are angled to the inside and outside, the actual bearing edge is made up entirely of birch plies. The basswood interior and exterior plies do add some warmth to the overall sound of the drum, but their main advantage is a consistent grain pattern that makes for an attractive finish.

Hardware And Heads

The Superstar drumkit features die-cast hoops with "ears" for the Star-Cast mounting system from Tama's high-end Starclassic series. The die-cast hoops provide solid tuning, while the ears negate the need for the mounting clamps that were used on the triple-flanged hoops on Rockstar drums. This permits the drums to move more freely. It improves resonance as well.

Tama has also designed new high-tension, low-mass Sound Bridge drum lugs specifically for the new Superstar series. The Sound Bridge concept provides for mini-

mal shell contact. You can actually see light under the section that connects the upper and lower lugs, which are isolated from the drum with rubber gaskets.

Even the humble drumkey has been specially designed for Superstar use. It's a serious tool with a long key shaft and a knurled knob on top for spinning tensions rods free. This elongated key fits neatly onto the ends of the bass drum tension rods, which are recessed within the claws.

Speaking of the bass drum tension rods: They have an O-ring placed just above the threads to prevent the rod and claw from being separated when removed from the drum—a small but thoughtful touch. The die-cast claws are solid but not overly massive. Rubber inserts inside the claws provide a guide to line up the tension rods with the lugs, protect the beautiful lacquered wood bass drum hoops, and dampen vibration.

When it comes to drumheads, many kits in this price range come with heads that are less than impressive. Not so with the Superstars. I wouldn't hesitate to use the Tama "Power Craft" drumheads that came on our review kit on my own drums in any professional situation.

Roadpro Stands

Superstar drumkits come with Tama's recently redesigned Roadpro hardware. Each kit is provided with a hi-hat stand, a boom cymbal stand, a straight cymbal stand, a snare stand, and a bass drum pedal. All are solid pieces, but they aren't excessively heavy.

The cymbal stands utilize new Quick-Set gearless tilters, which is a very nice feature. Loosen the wing nut, position the tilter where you like it, and tighten. Several disks within the tilter are pressed against each other to maximize friction—and thus holding power—without a lot of tightening required. There are no "teeth" to snag or to limit positioning. The tilter also has a built-in plastic sleeve to protect the cymbals.

The snare stand is equipped with a drumkey at the center of the snare basket arms. Loosen it and you can swivel the basket to the perfect position. To tighten the snare in the basket, take hold of the knurled knob and twist. There is no resistance up or down.

The HP200 single bass drum pedal (also known as the Iron Cobra Jr.) performs smoothly and offers numerous adjustable features. The Roadpro hi-hat stand demonstrated a solid, responsive feel, and it was easy to use. Its tripod rotates, and the footboard angle and spring tension are adjustable. I had no problem getting anything from a loose, swishy cymbal sound to a tight chick. Stomping away on the foot pedal gave no indication of construction weakness.

Tuning And Playing

Tuning the Superstar drums was perhaps the easiest such experience I've ever had. Maybe it was the die-cast hoops...or the quality drumheads...or the shell construction and bearing edges. Maybe it was all of these elements combined.

The hoops tensioned the heads smoothly and consistently all the way around the drum. Finding the harmonics of the head was not difficult at all. It also wasn't any real challenge to get the top and bottom heads to the same pitch. I'm used to triple-flanged hoops, and quite honestly I've never been a fan of die-cast models. I've always considered them stiff and without any musical give. But I may change my opinion after this experience. Each of the Superstar drums tuned up easily and quickly, resulting in a beautiful tone.

The toms have power and ring to them: I could almost feel the sound vibrate the air around each drum. The drums were also very responsive. Hit them hard, and you hear the slap of the stick on the drum, followed by the drum's pitch, tone, and harmonics. There is a warmth to the tone, even though it's tight and penetrating. Hit them softly, and the tone comes out ahead of the attack, for a nice musicality. The relative sizes of the toms helps create increments in tuning that are clear and distinct.

When I took the kit to a band practice, my bandmates were very impressed. There was no problem hearing the drums above the amps. The 8x10 tom had a high ring to it that came clearly through the music. The 9x12 had some meat and a solid tone. The suspended 11x14 produced a great bottom sound, firmly anchoring any fills around the toms. I could play a melody on these drums!

When I tuned the snare drum to a reasonable tautness, it produced a crisp, tight sound. When I struck the center, the drum was all business, with a pure, quick crack. Moving towards the edge added a little ring, increasing the drum's presence and sustain.

The snare features a wood shell just like the rest of the drums, so to get some ring from it is nice. As with the toms, the tuning is smooth and consistent, with the die-cast hoops tensioning the heads easily and uniformly.

The bass drum is 18x22. Need I say more? A drum of that depth is likely to produce a lot of sound, no matter what you do to it. When I played it with the solid head it came with, the drum had a little too much boominess and sustain for me. But when I put a hole in the head, things were fine. When you're pounding on a large drum with a foot pedal, something has to give, and letting the air and the sound out made a big difference.

When I tuned the bass drum tight, it produced a lot of attack. Each beat of the pedal yielded penetrating punch, clear definition, and pronounced presence and tone. I tried putting some muffling inside, and I was surprised to find that the drum didn't benefit from it. It sounded just fine on its own. Chalk this up to the built-in muffling rings on the supplied bass drum heads.

A Glowing Recommendation

There's no two ways about it: The new Superstar is a great kit, especially considering that with all its features, it's still priced only about $50 more than a Rockstar kit. I tried hard to find some "misses" that I could list at the beginning of this review. But considering the Superstars' thin birch/basswood shells, nice bearing edges, die-cast hoops, good heads, beautiful appearance, solid and innovative hardware, and great sound, what's not to like?

With the new Superstar line, Tama has given drummers a set that surpasses the quality of most mid-level drums, at a cost that is *more* than reasonable. They may just have set an entirely new standard.

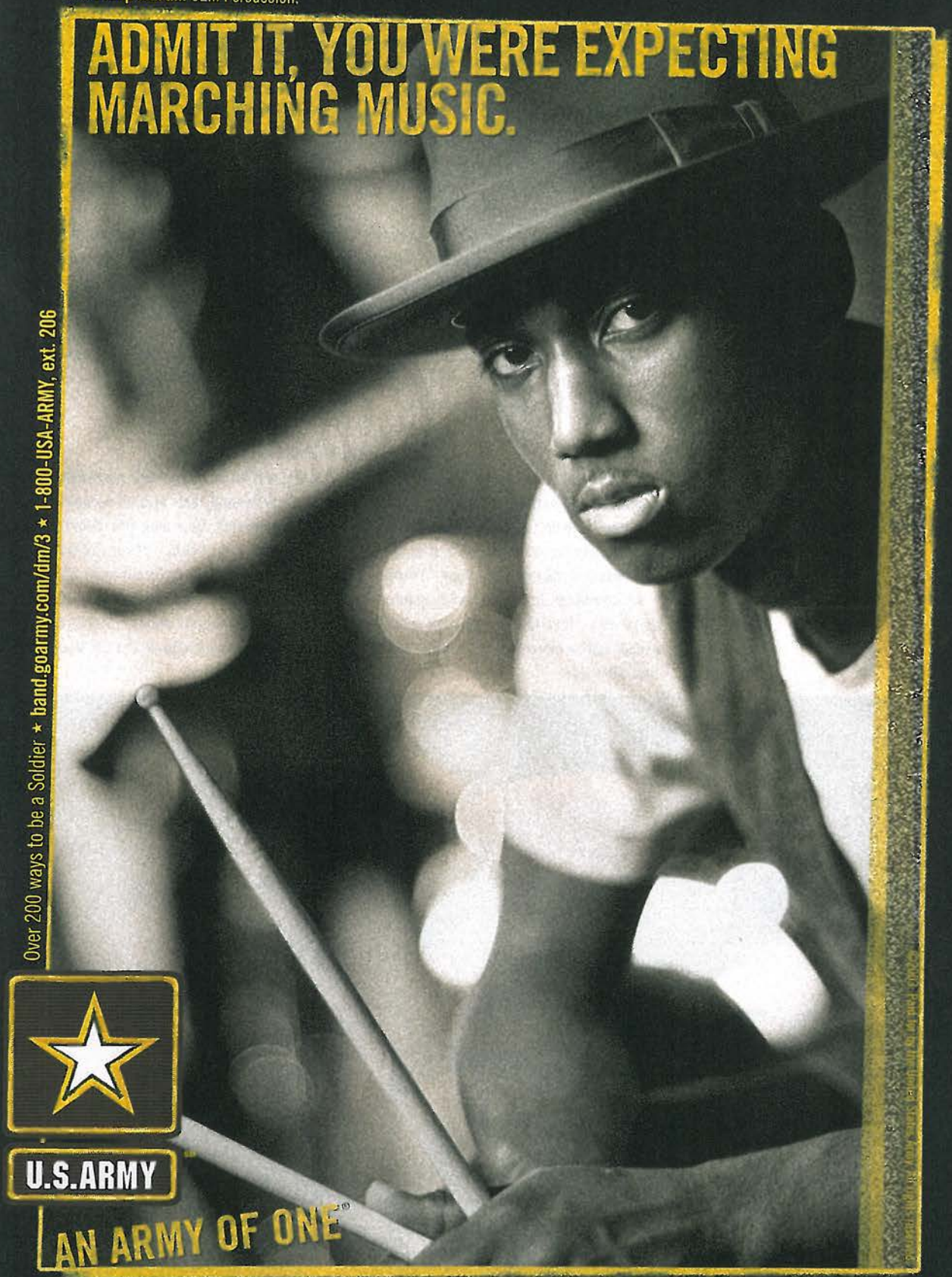
THE NUMBERS

Configuration: 8x10, 9x12, and 11x14 suspended toms, 5½x14 snare drum with 6-ply birch/basswood shells. 18x22 bass drum with 7-ply birch/basswood shell. Drums finished in Ocean Fade lacquer. Kit supplied with Roadpro hardware package.

List price: **$1,549.99**

(215) 638-8670, www.tama.com.

SPC **Philip Martin.** 02M Percussion.



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Sabian Vault Crash Cymbals

HITS

cymbals seem to have no volume threshold

strong bell definition

omplex sounds with unique characteristics

MISSES

16" crash seems inconsistent with larger sizes

by Paul Bielewicz

Sabian's concept for their new Vault series is that the cymbals offered within it won't be subject to any traditional categorization. Each item will be offered on its own merit for specific purposes. The new models developed so far were created in response to feedback from Sabian's Vault Tour, on which the company took prototypes out "into the field" to let artists, consumers, and dealers play and respond to them.

The first finished products to be generated by this process are Vault crashes, offered in 16", 17", 18", 19", and 20" sizes. Sabian says the new series is "designed to deliver high-speed responses with bright, shimmering sounds and a full sustain that enhances its impact and presence in any setting." The cymbals are also designed to be visually striking, with an almost mirror-reflective brilliant finish.

My initial impression was that many of Sabian's claims were accurate. Overall, the cymbals did have pronounced attack, lots of sustain, and a "punchy" nature. But they're more complex than that. Most of the sizes had unique characteristics that weren't necessarily present even in their closest-sized siblings. Let's take a closer look.

16" And 17" Crashes

The 16" Vault crash is the least complex of all the sizes. Its overtones are pretty standard, and its bell was satisfactory. As Sabian claims, its attack was indeed fast, and its sustain was notable. Otherwise it didn't have any particularly unique characteristics. However, this could actually make the 16" crash the most versatile of all the Vault crashes, since an absence of very specific sonic characteristics would make it a good "all-around" crash suitable for many different applications.

As compared to a traditional, general-purpose 16" crash, the fundamental pitch of the 16" Vault crash was a little lower, and stick definition was more articulated and defined. A standard thin crash would also be more likely to have a little "give" under constant stick attack. The 16" Vault crash was a little more rigid.

The 17" crash is the size at which many of the unique characteristics of the Vault line became apparent. It readily built up overtones, and its bell was more defined than that of the 16" size. In terms of playability, the 17" had the rubbery, "giving" feel that the 16" lacked.

Possibly the best selling point I can describe for the 17" (and all of the larger sizes) is volume. With simple stick articulation on the upper surface of the cymbal, a bevy of overtones began to build. As I moved the sticks toward the edge of the cymbal, notable volume soon followed.

Generally, when you play on the edge of a cymbal, its volume increases as you increase the pressure or speed of your sticks. Once you reach a certain point, however, the cymbal's volume generally does not increase any more, no matter how much harder you hit it. This axiom does not hold true for the Vault series. It doesn't seem to matter how hard you hit them, they just keep getting louder.

18", 19", And 20" Crashes

The 18", 19", and 20" Vault crashes each had a higher fundamental pitch than a traditional crash of a similar size would likely produce. But an interesting characteristic was present on all three. As I changed from simple stick articulation on the upper surface of each cymbal to a wash with a buildup of overtones, the pitch structure became more complex. Each of the larger cymbals had an "expected" fundamental pitch (the musical note one hears as the cymbal is played), but they also exhibited a lower pitch that was waiting just behind it, with increased volume. This lower note was the one that sustained when stick action was discontinued. In addition, the bells were very defined, with a pleasant tone applicable for many situations.

Each of the larger Vault crashes held stick articulation quite well. Many traditional crashes begin to get "muddy" under prolonged stick articulation on the upper portion of the cymbal. Not only do they stop building up volume (as mentioned earlier), but they also lose some of their musicality. The Vault crashes not only held their musicality under prolonged stick articulation, they also built up gradual overtones in the low fundamental mentioned previously.

The 20" model is definitely all crash. Stick articulation on the upper portion of the cymbal is possible, but it's certainly not as dry as a ride. Additionally, overtones built up readily, as one would expect from a crash. Interestingly, though, the bell on the 20" crash *is* comparable to one you might find on a standard ride: cutting, with a pleasant tone.

In terms of sheer volume, this puppy is *loud*. Again, the observation I made earlier held true: This cymbal's volume potential seemed to have no upper limit. The harder I hit it, the louder it got.

Conclusions

As advertised, the Sabian Vault crash line does indeed offer loud volume, high-speed response, bright, shimmering sounds, and full sustain. The presence of additional overtone/undertone characteristics in most of the sizes adds a bit of mystery. As such, The Vault line will no doubt appeal to drummers looking for volume, projection, and sustain, with the added benefit of distinctive acoustic personality.

THE NUMBERS

16" crash	$269
17" crash	$289
18" crash	$315
19" crash	$337
20" crash	$370

(506) 272-2019, www.sabian.com.

Meinl Fibercraft Congas And Professional Series Timbales

Some Pretty Snazzy Road Dogs

HITS

congas have warm sound with fiberglass durability

B8 cymbal alloy gives timbale shells extra character

all drums offer exceptional projection

MISSES

congas are heavy and have no handles

by Norman Arnold

I get excited when the UPS driver drops off boxes from Meinl. Their gear consistently displays excellent quality combined with natural playability and great sound. Our review items this month are no exception. Let's get right to them.

Fibercraft Series Congas

The Fibercraft series offers drums with an unusually warm sound, considering that they're made of "premium fiberglass" (which, to me, honestly looked and smelled a lot like, well...fiberglass). The shells are very smooth on the insides as well as the outsides, and the drums are very solidly put together. This makes them an excellent choice for use on the road.

For this review we had all three available sizes: 11" quinto, 11¾" conga, and 12½" tumba. The drums are wide in the middle and quite tapered at the base, providing a very resonant sound chamber inside each shell. The True Skin buffalo heads on the drums help to produce a very smooth sound for each drum.

All of the drums have rounded 4-mm Safe Sound Rims (SSR) that are very easy on the hands. The chrome-plated hardware and 10-mm tuning lugs are all of high quality. Rubber Conga Savers (a patented Meinl innovation) are great for protecting the exterior of the drums when they bump together.

It was a good thing that our review drums came with the Conga Savers, because their Blue Sparkle finish

looked fantastic even after I...I mean my *wife* knocked them into each other. Speaking of the finish, it was so deep that the drums actually looked black until a gleam of light hit them. Then the finish would blaze out in full. Very good on stage. Other available finishes include Red Sparkle, Jet Black, and Sterling Silver.

As usual, I tried a variety of tunings on all the drums—especially on the quinto. First, I tuned them up pretty tight in order to achieve the sort of pop sound that you'd want in order to project through a band. This sort of tuning runs the risk of the drums sounding thin, but the Fibercrafts retained a full tone that was surprisingly not too "fiberglass-y." Additionally, these drums were *loud*. I must admit to a bit of surprise at how well they projected.

The drums also performed well at a lower tuning, where they produced a meaty sound. And the volume was still at an impressive level.

Of course, one of the reasons that these congas generate such volume is the thickness of their fiberglass shells. That same feature also makes the drums fairly heavy. So while playing a set of Fibercrafts on a tour of one-nighters might be easy on your ears, it could be hard on your back. In addition, the drums do not have handles attached to the shells. So you're either going to be carrying one at a time with two hands, or carrying one in each hand while holding the lugs, which can be uncomfortable.

Professional Series Timbales

Meinl's Professional Series 14" and 15" timbales are made from German B8 cymbal bronze, which has a very nice golden hue. The drums have Cuban-style flared-out bottom edges that give them an old-time dance-hall look. The tuning brackets are cast from a brass alloy, and the tension bolts are recessed to create a flat rim. The drums attach firmly to their solid, double-braced stand, which comes with a cowbell holder rod.

As might be expected from timbales made from a cymbal alloy known for its bright and cutting character, cascara patterns played on the shells of these timbales really stand out. It's a very ringy but nonetheless defined sound. And it's *plenty* loud.

The sound of the drums is bright, alive, and very inspiring, making them easy to play. I tried various tunings, but I invariably found myself cranking up the pitch and just whacking these things.

When I tuned the 14" macho drum very high, I was rewarded with a sound that really cracked. (Some might even say it *hurt*.) The lower-pitched 15" hembra proved nice in a variety of tuning ranges. I'm usually partial to a lower pitch on this drum; I like to try to get a "cannon shot" sound out of it. The bronze hembra was more than up to the task.

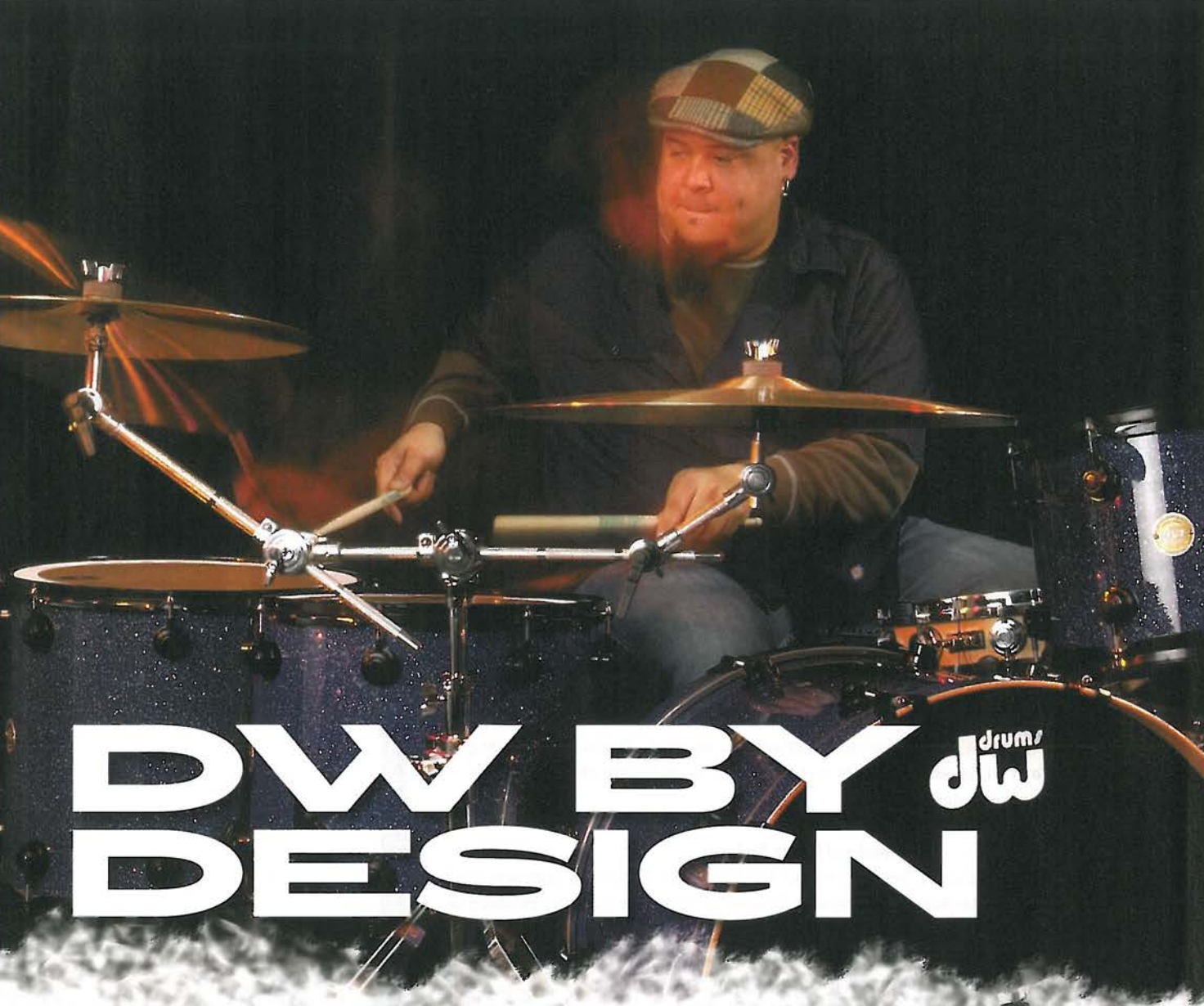
Conclusion

Whether I played the Fibercraft congas standing up (with the drums in available Steely Stands) or on the floor sitting down, they proved to be great-sounding, solidly constructed drums that would serve well in most professional situations—and particularly for road work. Likewise, the Professional Series timbales offered acoustic character and projection power that would serve well in anything from a blazing Latin jazz band to a pop/rock concert setup. Fire 'em up!

THE NUMBERS

11" Fibercraft quinto	$600
11¾" Fibercraft conga	$620
12" Fibercraft tumba	$640
14" and 15" Professional Timbales, with stand	$830

(615) 227-5090, www.meinlpercussion.com.



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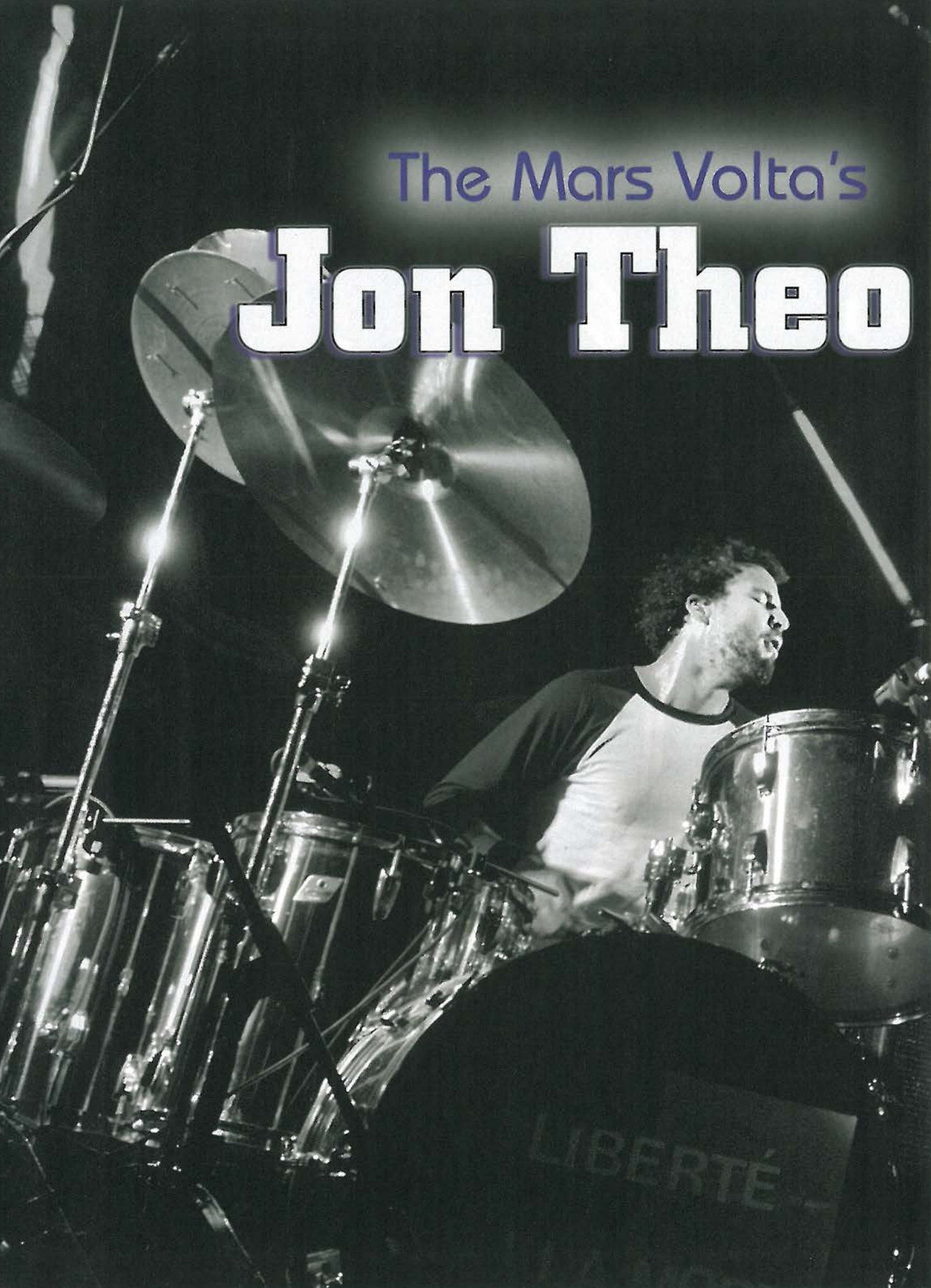
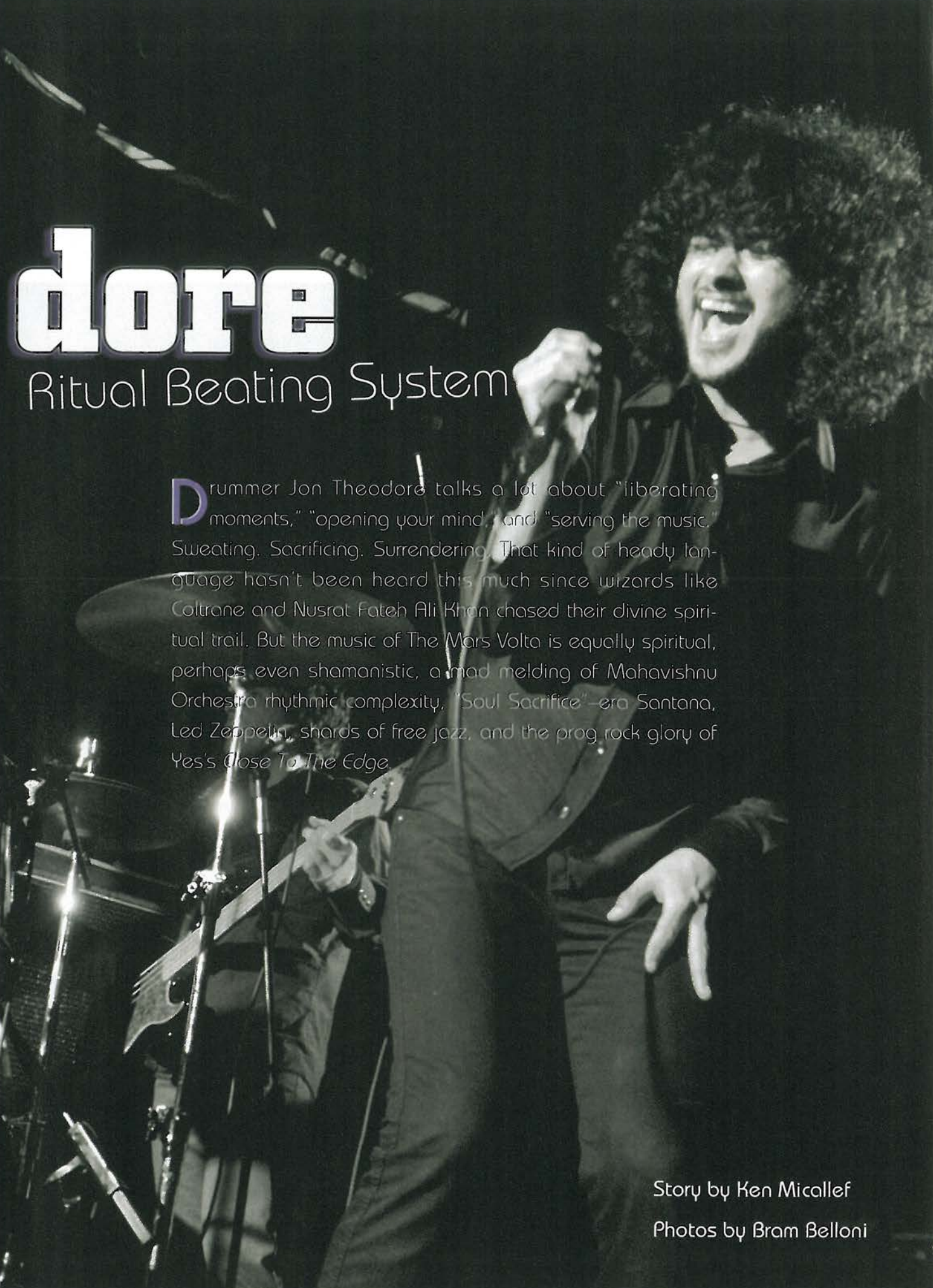

The Mars Volta's
Jon Theo
LIBERTÉ



dore

Ritual Beating System

Drummer Jon Theodore talks a lot about "liberating moments," "opening your mind," and "serving the music." Sweating. Sacrificing. Surrendering. That kind of heady language hasn't been heard this much since wizards like Coltrane and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan chased their divine spiritual trail. But the music of The Mars Volta is equally spiritual, perhaps even shamanistic, a mad melding of Mahavishnu Orchestra rhythmic complexity, "Soul Sacrifice"–era Santana, Led Zeppelin, shards of free jazz, and the prog rock glory of Yes's *Close To The Edge*.

Story by Ken Micallef

Photos by Bram Belloni

Of course, when they were coming of age, the men of The Mars Volta—guitarist Omar Rodriguez-Lopez, vocalist Cedric Bixler-Zavala, bassist Juan Alderete de la Pena, keyboardist Ikey Owens, percussionist Marcel Rodriguez-Lopez, and über-drummer Theodore—were influenced as much by punk and Latin as they were by fusion and classic rock. But it's their willingness to blaze past preconceived notions, to boldly stake their musical claim, risking both profundity and absurdity, that sets their improvisational, soulfully scorched music far apart from today's dumbed-down bands, shrunken-head radio formats, and accountant-controlled record labels.

The band's latest work, *Frances The Mute*, is a record for all those musicians who thought hope was lost, that simplistic punk-pop bands and static hip-hop loops would forever rule the day. With this, their second album, The Mars Volta reclaims the high ground of deep (if cryptic) thought, extended concepts, and instrumental brilliance. A record that critics will discuss (or diss) and kids will dissect, looking for hidden messages and inspiration, *Frances The Mute* demands attention and diligence.

Like running with the bulls at Pamplona, Jon Theodore approaches his task with wonder and occasionally a little worry. "*Modern Drummer* wants to do a cover on me?" he asks. "What if I suck tomorrow?"

The product of Oberlin College and several alt-rock bands, and a devotee of

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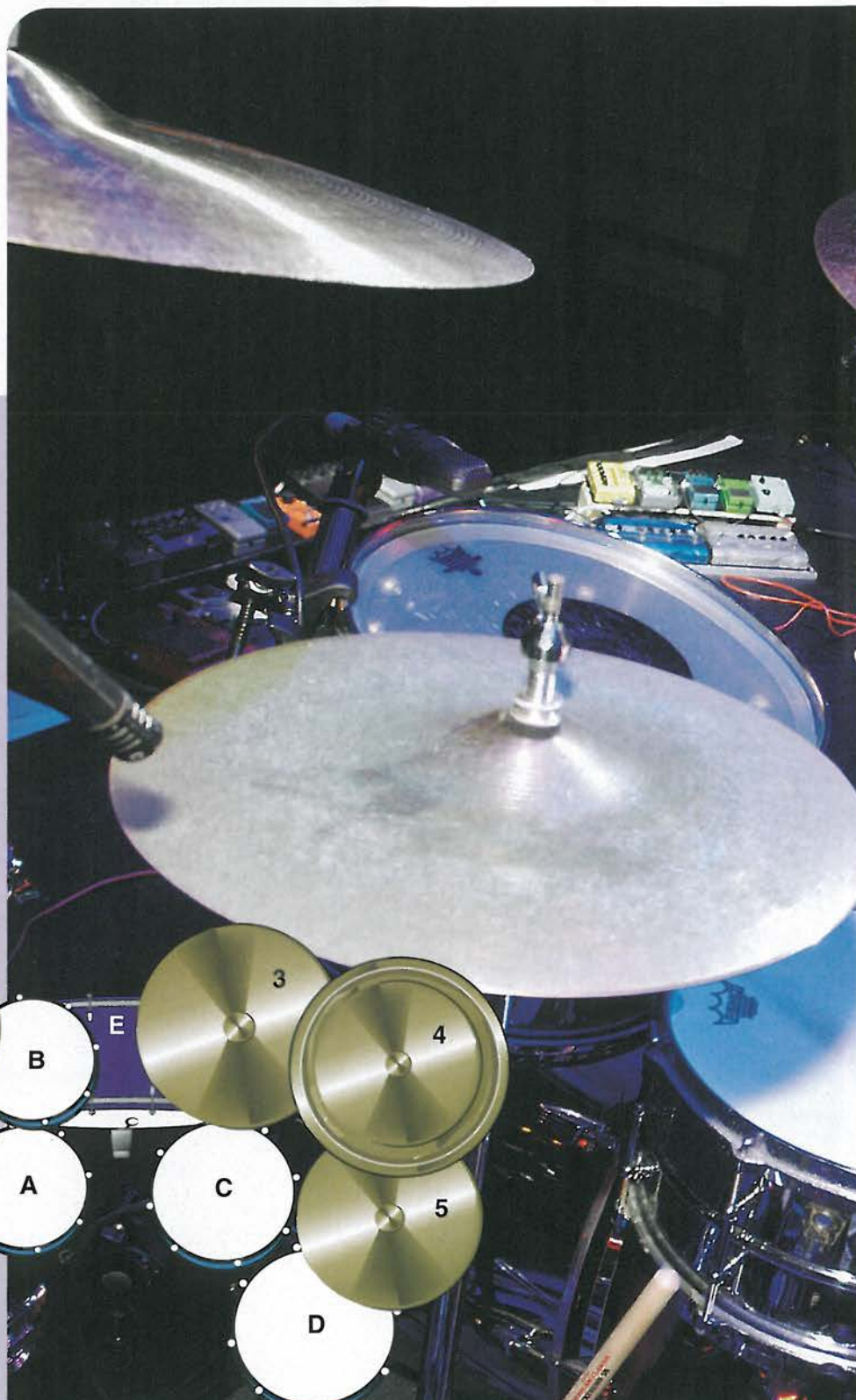

surfing, Billy Cobham, and an all-encompassing world/music view, Jon Theodore plays in a style so riotous, rip roaring, and energetic, it will literally take your head off. Matching Omar Rodriguez-Lopez's fusoid-psychedelic guitar riffs with a manic intensity that only fuels his over-the-top, take-no-prisoners drumming, Theodore refuses to discuss his work with the band as simply a series of rudiments and beats. His outlook is one of interconnectedness to the universe, of liberating moments that lead to ultimate release. For the rest of us that means listening to the fiery grooves of "Cygnus...Vismund Cygnus" or "Cassandra Gemini" with our ears pressed close to the speaker, trying to decipher how this guy not only keeps up, but *leads* this at times ridiculously histrionic rock and raunch down ever more circuitous and complex pathways.

Jon Theodore's drumming is a multi-layered and multi-textural thing. That Theodore sees his role within the band so clearly speaks to his passion and dedication to the art form. Like the blazing beats in "Facilis Descenus Averni," "Plant A Nail In The Navel Stream," and "Multiple Spouse Wounds," Theodore's art is cryptic, but endlessly fascinating.

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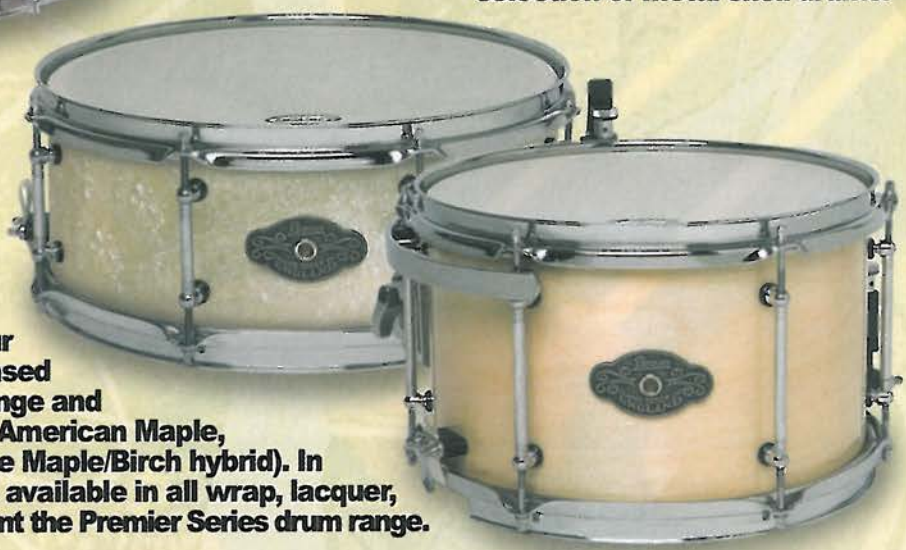

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Jon Theodore

MD: What's the key to playing such complex patterns with the kind of dynamics and endurance you exhibit with The Mars Volta? Some of these songs are like a torture test.

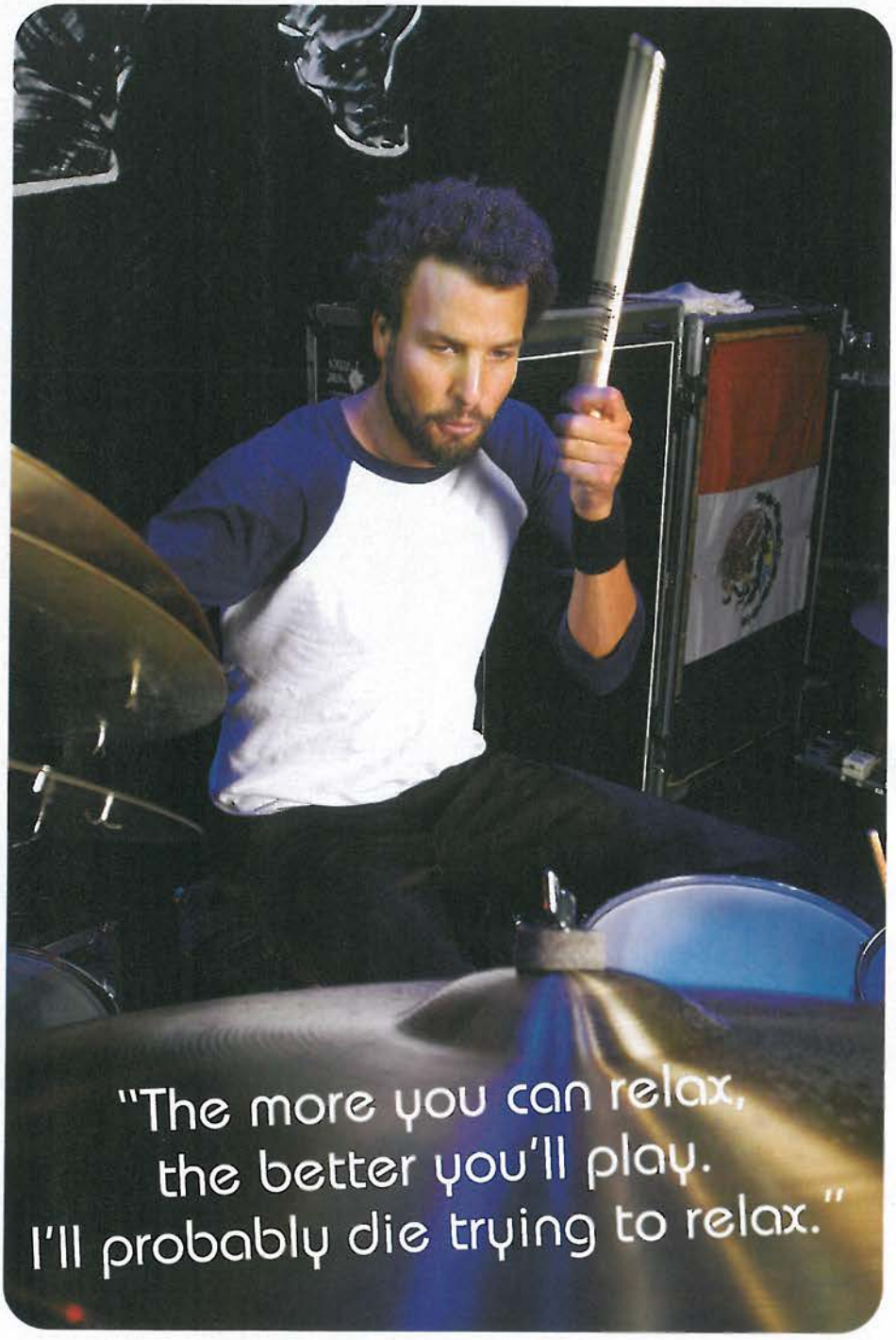
Jon: For *Frances The Mute,* we were at the end of a year and a half of touring, so I was in the best shape I'd ever been in. And I was doing a lot of surfing in Australia, which is good for your body and soul. I felt at the top of my game physically. But that's our thing: It's a ritual, it's a sacrifice. We're all here to sweat and serve ourselves up to the music.

MD: It's almost like a shamanistic ritual.

Jon: Absolutely. I leave my shoes at the back of the drum rug every night.

MD: The Mars Volta's songs are very rhythmically involved and complex. Does the band work up the songs piece by piece, riff by riff? What's the general process for creating the songs?

Jon: For this record, most of the time it was Omar and me in a room. He had a lot of the riffs in loose arrangements, and we then spent time arranging and mapping out



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Theodore's Recordings

Artist	Album
Golden	Apollo Stars
Golden	Golden Summer
The Mars Volta	Tremulant
The Mars Volta	De-Loused In The Comatorium
The Mars Volta	Frances The Mute
Royal Trux	Veterans Of Disorder
HIM	New Features

His Faves

Artist	Album	Drummer
Bembeya Jazz National	Authenticite 1973	Conde Mory Mangala
Bastro	Sing The Troubled Beast	John McEntire
Don Caballero	Don Caballero 2	Damon Che
John Coltrane	Live At Birdland	Elvin Jones
Rush	Hemispheres	Neil Peart
Led Zeppelin	Presence	John Bonham
Tony Williams Lifetime	Believe It!	Tony Williams
Mahavishnu Orchestra	Birds Of Fire	Billy Cobham
The Who	Live At Leeds	Keith Moon
Azor Racine	Mapou	Azor
King Crimson	Red	Bill Bruford
The Melvins	Lysol	Dale Crover
Neil Young	On The Beach	Levon Helm
Black Sabbath	Volume 4	Bill Ward
James Brown	In The Jungle Groove	Clyde Stubblefield
Fela Anikulapo Kuti	Zombie	Tony Allen
Mastodon	Leviathan	Brann Dailor
Dr. John	Desitively Bonaroo	Zigaboo Modeliste
Phantomsmasher	Phantomsmasher	Dave Witte
Jimi Hendrix	Band Of Gypsys	Buddy Miles
Jimi Hendrix	Axis: Bold As Love	Mitch Mitchell
The Jesus Lizard	Head	Mac McNeilly

the songs and in the process figuring out what the rhythmic structures would be. Then we gradually added the other instruments [including The Red Hot Chili Peppers' Flea on trumpet and John Frusciante on guitar]. It was song by song, part by part. Often Omar would already have the general arrangement of the song, and it would be a matter of molding it to where we were both comfortable and where he felt like it still retained its original intention.

MD: You sound so interlocked with every note Omar plays.

Jon: Absolutely. That's the nature of what we do. We tend to hash out that interaction first.

MD: When constructing your drum parts, are you modeling directly off Omar's guitar lines?

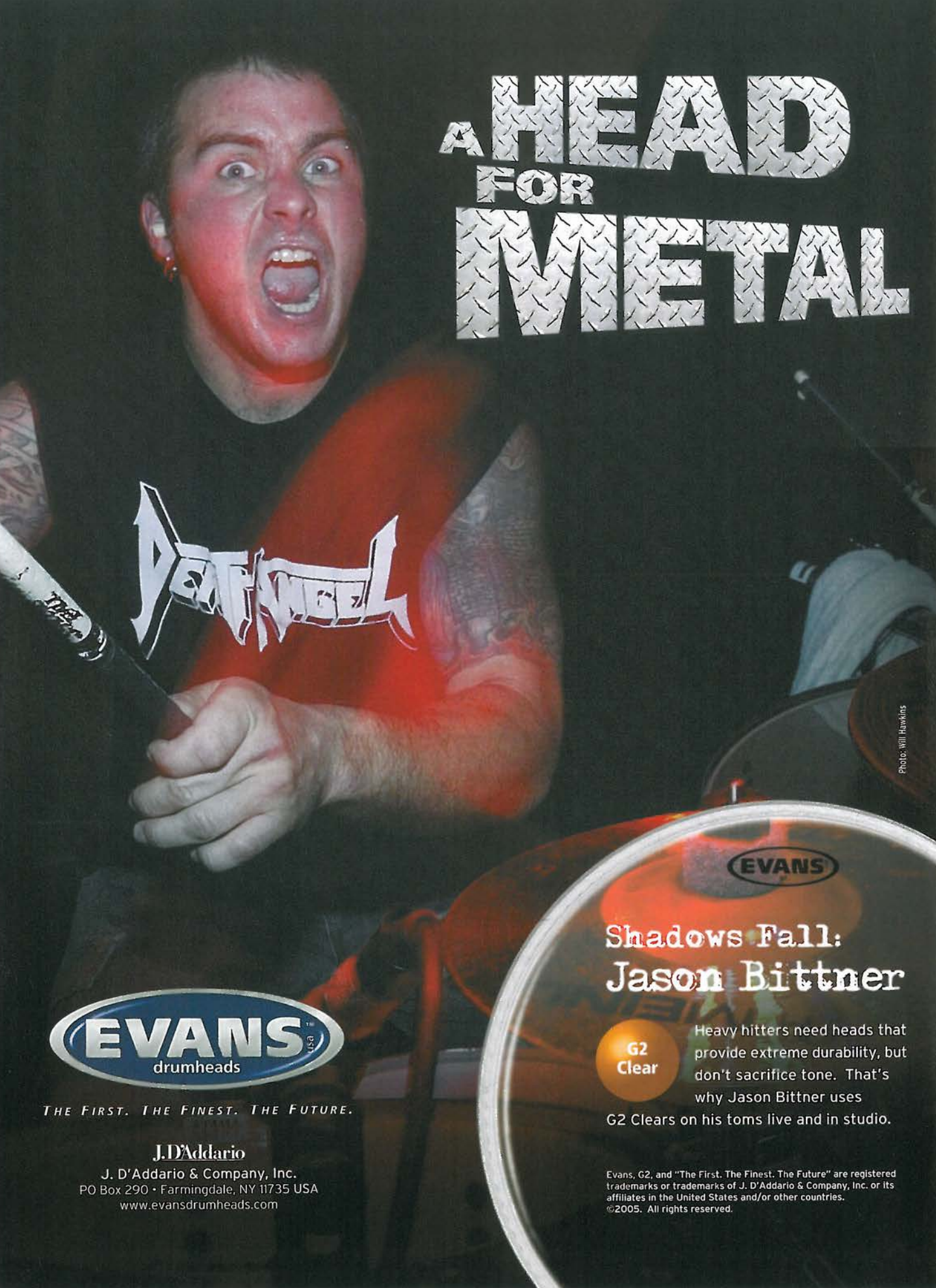
Jon: No. I normally start with the most abstract thing I can possibly think of. If I'm having writer's block, I might ape the guitar line. But my intention is usually to find the most dynamic and exciting drum part I can find. I listen to guitar riffs and see what they make me think of and where I feel the accents are, and I begin to push my way into it. We just play and play until the ideas start to refine themselves, stopping along the way to make sure we're on the right path. It may be that the pattern I come up with doesn't fit exactly, but we're so excited about it that the guitar line will change. Or I might not understand the rhythm, but by deconstructing it, that will inspire me to create something that I wouldn't usually be inclined to play.

Tracking The Mute

MD: Does The Mars Volta record live as a band, or do you and Omar track first and then add the other parts?

Jon: Actually, I tracked the majority of this record alone with a metronome.

MD: What did you use for a click track?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Jon Theodore

Jon: I used a cowbell. We built a click map on the computer so we could change the tempo depending on how we wanted a song to feel. I'm so new to using a metronome that I just kept my eyes shut and imagined some guy with shades leaning against the wall hitting a cowbell.

MD: What was your guide for the melody?

Jon: We had spent so much time sorting out the arrangements that I was aware of the song structures. For example, I would know that a verse section repeats six times in one spot, and then the vocal comes in after two verses, or that there's a gradual build through the verse in dynamic intensity and then a signifying change like a drum fill for the chorus.

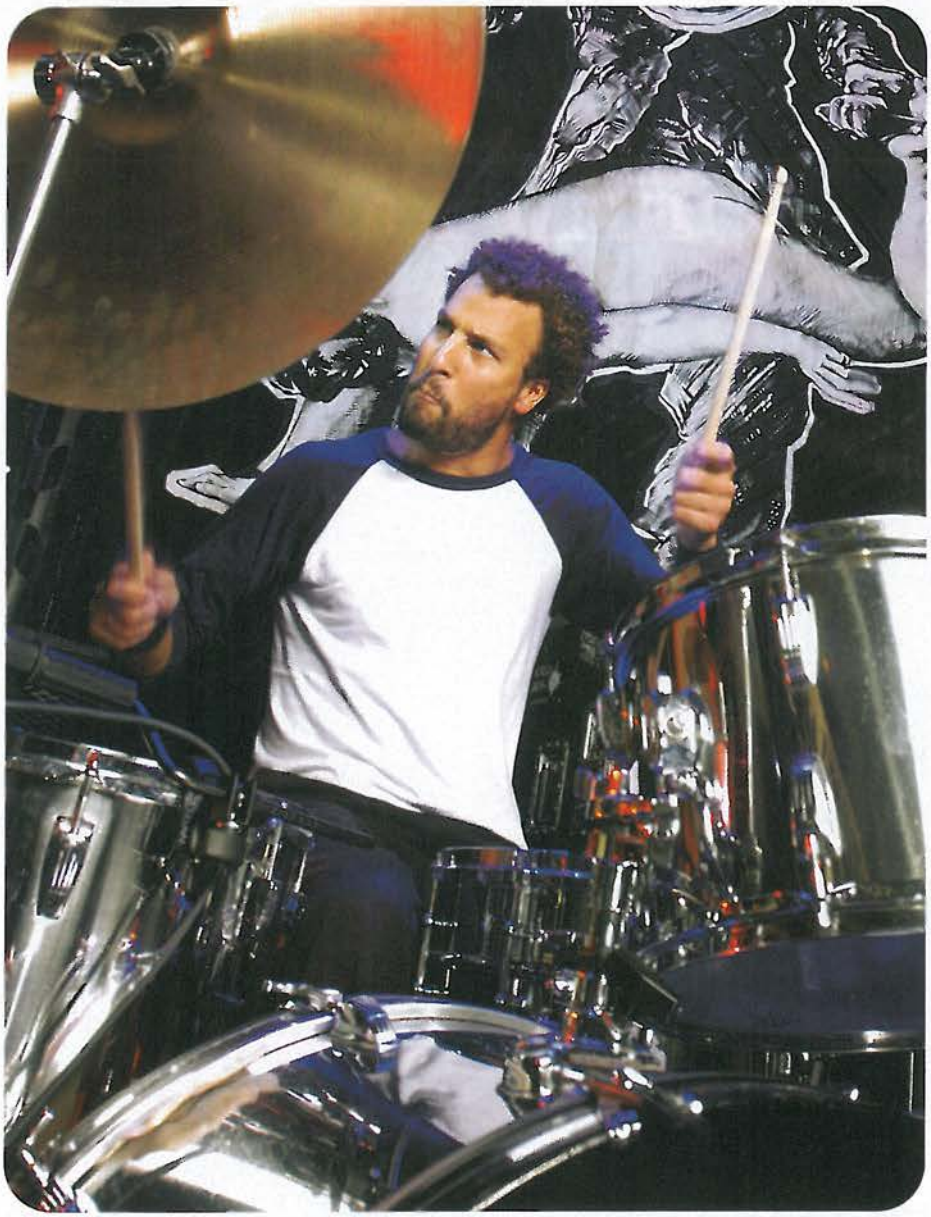
This is the first time I've ever been so methodical about recording. Normally I would go into the situation with as good an idea as I could, whether that was from already performing the songs on tour or having a general road map. But this was the first instance where I considered every single hit all the way through, every figure up to and including every change. There were no question marks. So when I was tracking with the metronome it was just a question of right or wrong.

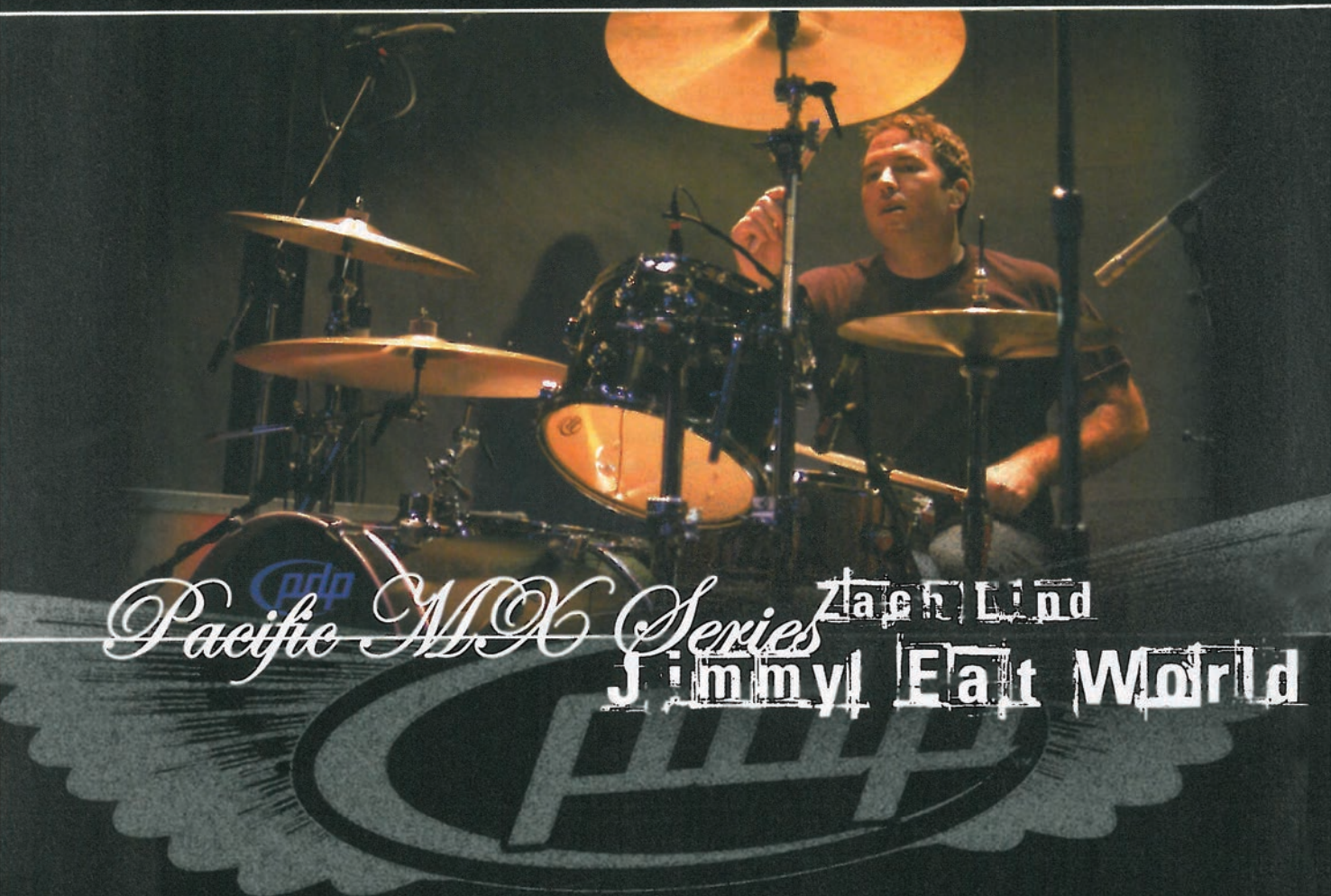
MD: Did you write out charts?

Jon: I wrote notes for sure. My memory is my weakest trait. So I would write out arrangements for myself to work through. I would record with the metronome and then go back and listen. Sometimes parts were shaky, but overall the performances were good. But if something was wrong I went back and did it over.

MD: Why record the drum tracks first?

Jon: We didn't use a metronome on the





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last album, so the tempos were all over the place. But the drum patterns for this album are so precise because I conceived them as being these methodical, cut and dried, mostly static grooves. I decided that the power in them would be their steadiness.

I've never had luck playing with metronomes in the past, because I always tried to put the metronome in one ear and the band in the other. Inevitably, someone would be pulling the time and it sounded like we were chasing the metronome. This time I knew the arrangements, so I thought I could be more precise and consistent if I could hear every drum and not listen to the other instruments at the same time.

It was strange at first. There were people in the control room who would normally be playing, but who were now just listening. I could tell immediately from their reactions whether my time was in or not.

MD: So recording the drums first allowed you to be more consistent and powerful?

Jon: Ultimately, yes, because this was a chance for us to use the studio to make a record. We weren't trying to capture our live show. We ended up putting strings and horns on the album. There's a lot of information on it. We felt that it was important to start with a solid foundation so we could layer the instruments.

One song, "Cassandra Gemini," is an exception to that. I tracked the head and the end of the song with a metronome. Then we recorded bass, guitar, and drums live in a twenty-minute improvisational part for the middle. You hear tape edits in and out of the long jam session.

We also recorded the drums alone because we wanted to record them to tape. We believe the best sound for drums is the tape compressing the signal, the natural sound of drums hitting tape. We're purists in a lot of ways. The reason we choose certain mic's, the room, and the heads was all for the way it would sound going to tape.

After the drums were finished, they were transferred to hard disc and Pro Tools. We also recorded at Byron Bay in Australia at the end of our Big Day Out tour. We recorded drums for eight days and then transferred them to a studio in LA.

MD: Were there eight-hour rehearsals for *Frances The Mute*, as there were for *De-Loused In The Comatorium*?

Jon: For the first album, we all lived together. All we did was rehearse to get the band off the ground. We needed to make a sound, which entailed getting to know each other so we could relate musically and dynamically.

This time Omar had been writing a lot on tour, but we didn't have time to rehearse. It was more using soundchecks to explore the ideas. Then we would use those ideas in the set that night. We're doing that now with some newer songs.

MD: When recording such intense material, is it possible to do multiple takes?

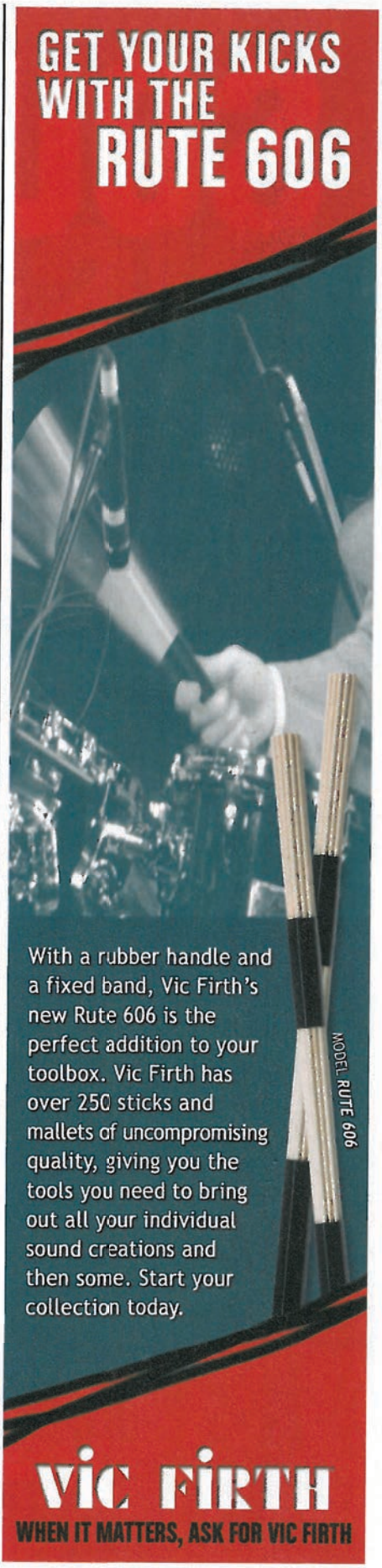
Jon: On the longer pieces, if I got halfway through and made a mistake, we would just punch in and fix it. That was the beauty of tracking alone with a metronome. It was as easy as winding the tape back. My whole life I've watched all the other players punch in and overdub their parts. But for me, if it wasn't solid all the way through, then we would do it all over again.

> "We're all here to sweat and serve ourselves up to the music. That's our thing."

These Are The Answers

MD: At times your drumming recalls Billy Cobham with The Mahavishnu Orchestra. How did you raise your bar to that level? What did you practice?

Jon: By the time I was hip to Mahavishnu I was already out playing. When I first started I was playing along to Led Zeppelin and Rush records. But I didn't really get hip to Billy Cobham until the end of high school. I went through the unbearable phase of having no sense and just smashing away to try to grasp techniques that were over my head, spending hours repeating things that were of little or no conse-



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quence. I was trying to reproduce what I thought was hip or cool.

I was lucky to have this sort of blind devotion to the instrument that allowed me to not actually hear or see myself. The time I spent developing facility on the instrument was this blissfully ignorant phase. By the time my head evolved and I began to pay attention to emotional and theoretical concepts, thinking, feeling, understanding, and looking for things to learn, I had already spent a few years smashing the drums. So when I got into Cobham on *Inner Mounting Flame*, *Spectrum*, and *Birds Of Fire,* I was already capable of dropping any sort of preconceived context or notion for anything.

I don't know if this came from the ability to decontextualize and deconstruct information and get abstract. It was an idyllic blossoming that allowed me to embrace everything from Elvin Jones and Billy Cobham to Neil Young. It allowed me to derive inspiration from things that weren't just a guy in the magazine with a specific set of drums or cymbals. It became much more cosmic.

So when I heard Billy Cobham's amazing style, I wasn't trying to play along with his records or play like him. I was just trying to remain open to it and I was excited that the world *had* a Billy Cobham. That music was my favorite thing to listen to and in a lot of ways it still is. But I didn't try to learn what he was doing note for note.

MD: But you didn't just sit down one day and play as you do now.

Jon: But these are the answers. I could tell you that I took some drum lessons in high school and that I went to Oberlin College and spent hours in the library listening to records and watching people play and playing in bands, but that's all part of the formative thing. I'm operating under the assumption that someone reading this magazine plays drums every day. That seems like a given to me. What *isn't* a given is how to open your mind as a musician.

MD: There's not a right or wrong answer, but it is important to present the whole picture. Studying rudiments and music is not always implied, and not everyone studies music or even the rudiments.

Jon: There's no reason to study a rudiment unless you have a concept of how it can be applied to your life—do you know what I mean? There's no reason to tell somebody to study a rudiment. If a kid is interested in different ways of inverting a paradiddle, then he'll find a way to do it.

MD: But obviously you know what a paradiddle is, and you're an advanced player, and you understand that the conception is what separates the men from the boys. But how do you free your mind and apply that with technique? You've freed your mind to the point where you probably don't know exactly what you're playing half the time.

Jon: Absolutely.

MD: But we ask about what you're playing in hopes that we can learn something.

Jon: Let me lay this on you. *Modern Drummer* is the first mag I cared about. I used to wait at the door for it every month. I would play to all the floppy records inside. I also had *Stick Control* and *Syncopation.* But my thing *now* is I throw caution to the wind and let it fly. I want to give kids the option to think about music in a different way.

MD: Do you consider yourself to be more of a natural drummer and less of a technical, trained drummer?

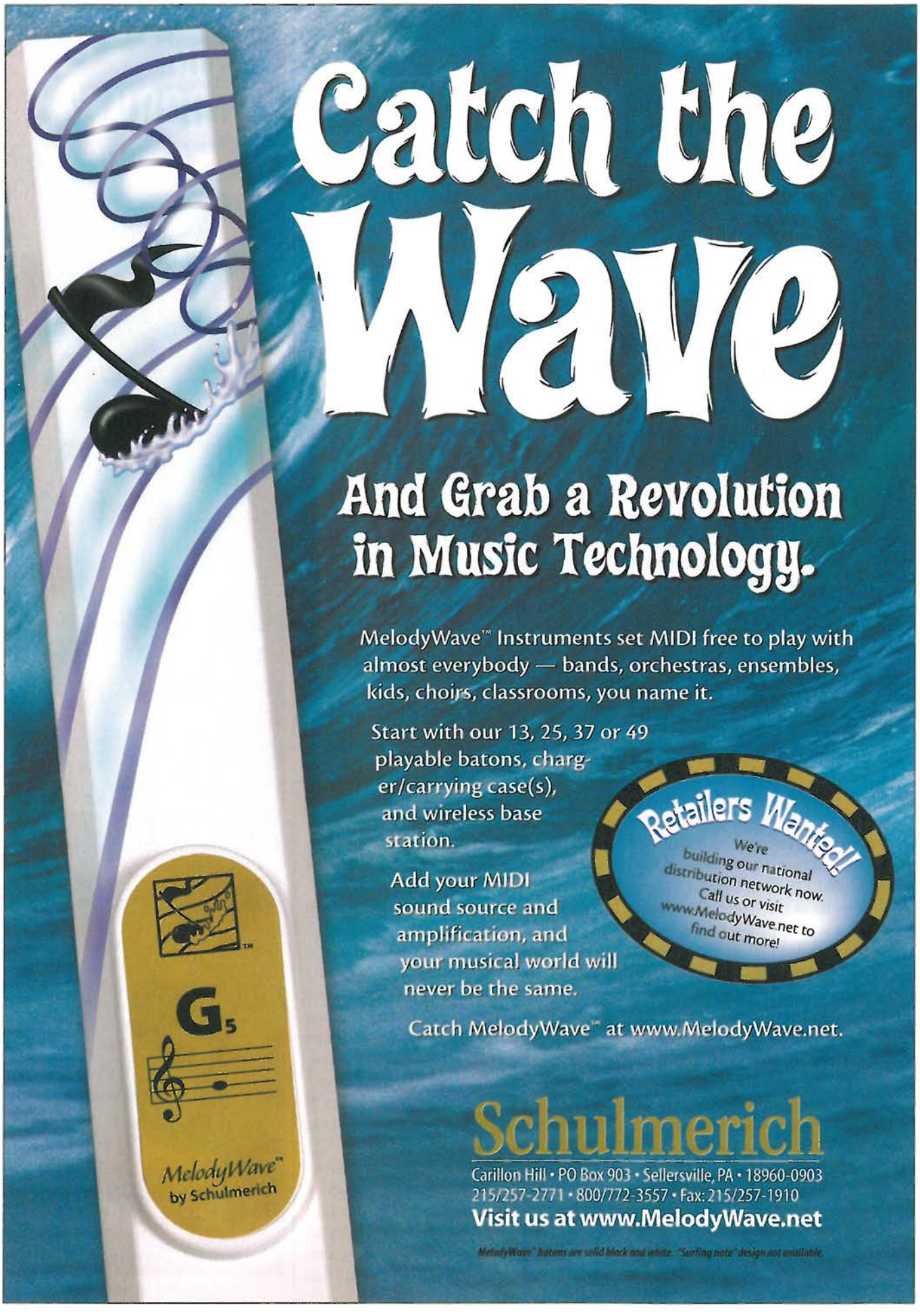
Jon: At this point I am more of a natural drummer, which is probably the result of the years I spent practicing *really* hard. I practiced so hard that I ate up everything I could find—books, articles, practice pads. I completely immersed myself. But after a while I became so busy making recordings and touring that it flipped itself. It became my life more than anything else. It got to a point where I needed to take time off.

Finding Liberation

MD: Was meeting Omar and Cedric a fortuitous moment that allowed you to express yourself?

Jon: I realized how amazing it was. I'm brown skinned and was born in '73, and I had nothing but questions when I was a child. Then I found the drums, and all I could do was hit them as often and as hard as I could. It became the most liberating experience of my life. All of a sudden those life questions didn't seem as important. Maybe I already had the answers but I couldn't write them on a piece of paper. It might be as simple as "the drums set me free."

I had never played outside of technique, but when I got away from practicing every day I completely abandoned technique. Like I said, a lot of my technique was residual. Eventually I started listening to heavy, simplified music like The Jesus Lizard, Bad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Brains, and The Melvins. The drumming was powerful. You couldn't play that hard if you were using proper technique. So I abandoned it all for that, and that was another liberating moment. My life is about finding those moments. And Omar and Cedric presented another situation.

MD: You met them while you were playing with the band Golden?

Jon: Yes, at a gig, but then I didn't see them for years after that. I wanted to move to Los Angeles, and I wanted to surf and drive the coast highway. And then I got home and there was a message from Omar on my machine saying they wanted me to play drums. We talked once on the phone and I was there.

MD: How do you pace yourself so you don't lose strength during a performance?

Jon: It's really difficult. I get excited, a mixture of anxiousness and excitement all at once. When we play, it's hard for me to not come out blasting. Often I don't pace myself. But I'm working on it. I want to be consistent. That's one of my main focuses now. When the stage lights go on, you have to stay calm and centered and try to make sure you're hitting as hard as you can but still playing within your means.

MD: Is that the same advice you would give for playing at such extreme dynamic levels as you do?

Jon: The more you can relax, the better you'll play. I'll probably die trying to relax.

MD: There is such an unusual spirit in this music. Is it self-generating?

Jon: On good days, yes. Then it's like a trance. When it all comes together, the entire universe disappears. But that doesn't happen all the time. The reason we push ourselves so much and look for new things is because that's what we're after. It's not about the audience or the gear. It's about the fact that when you're really hitting it and it's working, it's the best thing in the world. In that state you can go anywhere and never play a wrong note. It's like a runner's high. That's what we strive for.

MD: You mentioned in the last *MD* article that things can sometimes crash like a jumbo jet. How do you recover in those situations?

Jon: The most important thing is humility, knowing that you're doing your best and doing your job and that everyone makes mistakes. Hopefully your preparation and all the car accidents you've narrowly avoided will come into play. Try to quiet all your senses and find your way to the surface. It's a delicate balance.

Freaking Out With Frances

MD: On "Drunken Ship Of Lanterns" [from *De-Loused In The Comatorium*], are you loosely playing a marching figure on the snare drum and a songo on the bass drum?

Jon: It's accented 16th notes on the snare drum; if you play that pattern without accents over that bass drum pattern it becomes obvious how many different accent patterns there are to play. Then you can pick and choose which accents you want to put where. That syncopated bass pattern tends to lift out and encourage different accent patterns. It's not a marching figure, it's just keeping time on the snare.

MD: I understand that your father played Haitian music in your house growing up, and I presume that Omar and Cedric heard a lot of Latin music. It sounds like rhythm is ingrained in The Mars Volta.

Jon: The Haitian music that moves me has the drumming from the voodoo rituals. It moves me because the patterns are connected to different spirits; it's a spiritual thing that is interconnected with dancing, sacrifice, and devotion. It's fully passionate. There is nothing contrived about it.

MD: In "Cygnus...Vismund Cygnus" [*Frances The Mute*] it sounds like you're hitting a lot of China or pang cymbals.

Jon: That's a stack of busted metallic stuff I have on a cymbal stand. There are two hi-hat cymbals that are completely mangled and have holes drilled through them, a splash cymbal with a cracked bell, and various small, shredded cymbals with metal washers. It's a pretty disgusting sound. But it works well for what we are after, which is a specific, short sound.

A China cymbal is too aggressive-sounding, and I don't like that sound or how long Chinas sustain. I wanted an arresting, gnarly sound that I could use instead of a hi-hat.

MD: Later in that song, after the guitar solo, it sounds like you're breaking into odd meters. I can't tell if it is groups of five or six.

Jon: There are very few things I have ever counted in this band. The only thing that I counted was the very first pattern, kind of a broken paradiddle in "Cassandra Gemini."

MD: In "L'Via L'Viaquez," is there a sampled loop of some sort in the beginning?

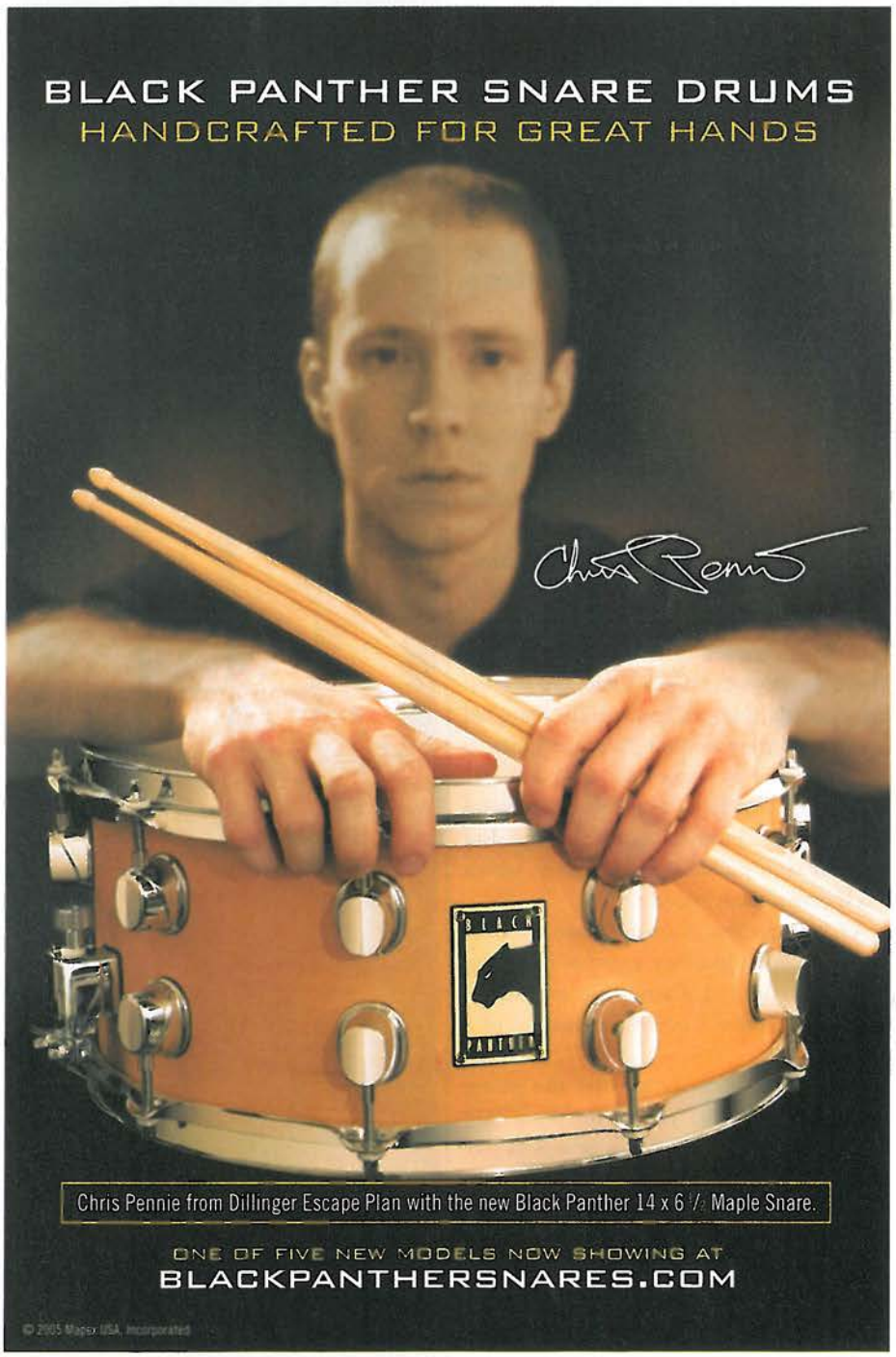
Jon: Yes. That's an old rehearsal tape being played backwards. I don't even know from when or where.

MD: You play the main groove of that song as a double-time, very hyper pattern. It sounds like Lenny White with Return To Forever. What are you playing on the bass drum, triplets?

Jon: In that main groove, there are no triplets on the bass drum. They're just broken-up 8th notes. I'm playing ghost notes on the snare drum, though, which is what fills up the groove.

MD: Some of your grooves sound like John Bonham on speed, a similar galloping bass drum attack and aggression. It's like Bonzo playing drum 'n' bass.

Jon: I love everything he played. He had one of the best feels in the history of rock. The fills in the middle of "L'Via L'Viaquez" are fully John Bonham inspired. And for the second track on the album, "The Widow," I kept thinking about "Since I've Been Loving You." I wanted to make it heavy without sounding like I was playing in some nu-metal band.



MD: What are you playing on the rim of the snare drum in the slow Latin part of the tune?

Jon: That's just a straight quarter-note cross-stick on the snare and 8th notes on the hi-hat. I was just keeping time for Lenny Castro and Larry Harlow—he's the Lenny Castro of piano. He played piano on all the Fania All Stars records, the sound of New York salsa in the '70s.

MD: Your pattern in "Cassandra Gemini" recalls a drum 'n' bass groove as well.

Jon: I think of it as a paradiddle with extensions on it. Then it turns into an old-time rock beat. But the original groove is a paradiddle between the hi-hat and the snare drum, which then extends to match the guitar riff. Those tom figures on the vamp are part of the only section that we recorded as a band.

Each song has subtitles, but I'm not sure what they mean. But "Cassandra" is all based on a drum-led twenty-minute jam. Then Omar added doubled guitars and strings. That's his shining moment as a producer. It's very Zappa-esque.

Matching Mars

MD: How do you recommend drummers play along to a Mars Volta record?

Jon: Do you remember those photographs back in the early '90s, where it looked like a mess, but when you squinted an image would jump out? I think that's a good analogy for my style. That's what I would recommend when listening to us.

What moves me is music that makes me wonder what the drummer was hearing in his head when he recorded it. Anyone can ape someone's style, but the point is to be able to hear the things that person is hearing that sets their limbs and mind in motion on the drums and eventually calls forth the sound they create.

Regarding my drumming style, I would say don't look too closely, because it's not specific to any beat that's happening in a particular song. Try to flip your perception to where *you* think accents should go or where *you* think a fill should go. Then try *not* to do that. Push yourself out of your comfort zone. Instead of relying on what you know, push yourself over the edge to a place where you don't know what you're doing. Record it, listen back, and then try to reproduce it. Shift your mind into that gear.

As for my playing style, I want to remain relevant. That requires evolution.

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Pearl
www.pearldrum.com

PWC1201IX
12" Tumba shown with PC1201IX Basket Stand

PWC2041IX
10" & 11" Set with Basket Stands

YAMAHA CRAFTSMAN PROFILE

FROM BIRTH...

MASAYUKI TAWADA

Job Title: Shell Preparation and Sanding Specialist
Years Experience: 17 years

"Through my many years of making Yamaha Drums, I know the importance of preparing a naked shell for a quality paint finish. The foundation for every drum's appearance begins with my hand-sanding process. Because of this, I am determined to make sure every Yamaha drum looks as good as it sounds."

DETERMINATION

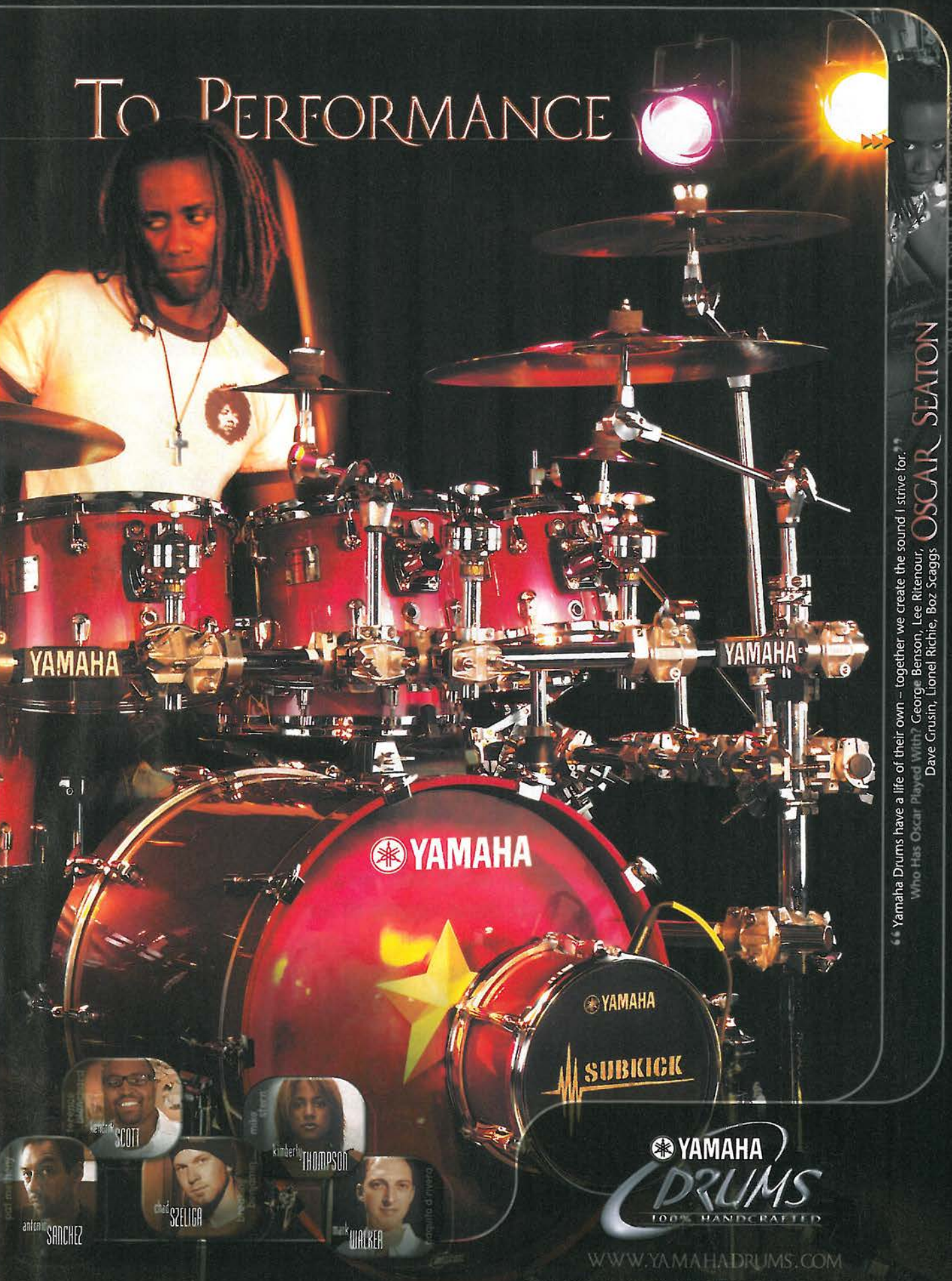
From Benson to Ritenour, Grusin to Scaggs, Oscar's determination to make the music groove is as essential to him as his drums.

Did you know...
At Yamaha Drums, we have ALWAYS created and lacquered ALL of our own shells AND made our own hardware.

Yamaha quality from Birth to Performance, from our hands to yours... who makes your drums?

Absoulte Maple Nouveau in Pink Pearl Fade

ARTISTS IN THE KNOW



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Percussion Products Extravaganza

Let's face it: Darn few drummers would ever admit to having "enough gear." Oh sure, we may complain about lugging all our stuff around, but truth be told, we actually cherish every piece of equipment we have, right down to the last wing nut. And we absolutely *love* to fantasize about stuff that we don't have. (Someday...someday.)

Well, *MD* is happy to help you fulfill those fantasies, with our sixth annual product pictorial. We've got drums, cymbals, percussion, electronics, accessories...everything today's drummer could possibly want. With everything there is to cover, we'll just hit the high points here. Web sites are listed to help you get more details.

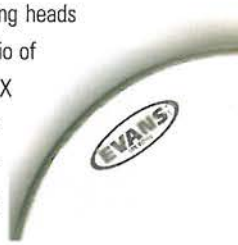
Let the ogling begin!

The Mini-Pro is a compact professional kit with retro-style hardware.

Drum Workshop Collector's series kits are now available in a new Hard Satin finish, said to provide the durability of lacquer and the elegance of satin oil. Also new is the 7-ply all-maple Mini-Pro kit, which comes with scaled-down versions of DW's 6000 series flush-base stands.

DW's 9550 Universal hi-hat links a remote pedal to a legless hi-hat stand placed anywhere on the kit. And the 6500 hi-hat offers high-end features with a low-weight flush-base design.

www.dwdrums.com.



Evans MX White tenor marching heads are said to offer the perfect ratio of attack, sustain, and decay. MX White snare batters feature a "thin weave" construction for a softer feel with great projection.

www.evansdrumheads.com.

Gibraltar's Ultra Adjust gearless tom arm provides infinite adjustability. The L-rod section pivots into eight different positions, allowing the player to invert the L-rod to hang floor toms from any stand or rack, as well as to find the "perfect" setting for a rack tom.

Gibraltar's Compact Leg Practice Pad is designed to lay flat or to tilt at an angle for traditional-grip practice.

www.kamanmusic.com.

Renown Purewood kit featuring walnut shells and Natural Gloss finish

Gretsch's new Renown Purewood series offers 6-ply walnut or cherry shells in gloss UV finishes, along with all of Gretsch's professional features. Only one hundred sets will be produced in each configuration.

Catalina Club Rock kits feature 26" bass drums, 14", 16", and 18" toms, and a 20-lug 6½x14 snare. The drums feature mahogany shells in special covered Nitron or gloss UV finishes. Catalina Club Roll outfits come with a specially designed rolling Gibraltar Road Series rack for mobility.

www.kamanmusic.com.

Latin Percussion's 40th Anniversary djembe is finished in a red fade, with the company's 40th Anniversary logo sealed into the wood. Also new are congas and bongos, as well as rawhide maracas, all finished with the flag of Puerto Rico, in tribute to that island's contribution to Latin music.

LP's redesigned Karl Perazzo timbales have 14" and 15" steel shells finished in antique bronze and fitted with plastic heads. The mid-price set includes a newly designed stand and a cowbell bracket.

www.lpmusic.com.

40th anniversary djembe

Puerto Rico Flag Percussion

Ludwig Classic Maple snare drums are now available with black cherry, black walnut, South American mahogany, Macassar ebony, makore, pearwood, sapele

pomele, East Indian rosewood, and santos rosewood veneers. All drums are available at $100 above the standard model suggested retail price.

www.ludwig-drums.com.

M Series Birch kit

The massive display setup shown at right demonstrates the "anything is possible" approach taken by **Mapex** when it comes to drum sizes and finishes in their flagship Orion series. This finish is Teal Burst.

Also from Mapex is the M Series Birch line. It features birch shells for control and punch, with a single exterior ply of maple for staining purposes.

www.mapexdrums.com.

Orion Series kit

Meinl's new Mb20 cymbals are an aggressive, line designed for musicality and maximum projection. It includes Soundwave hi-hats, crashes, rides, a Rock China, and a Rock splash. The cymbals are hand hammered into shape and given a brilliant finish.

In percussion, Artist Series Luis Conte Signature congas feature 2-ply rubberwood stave shells, True Skin buffalo heads, and traditional rims mounted as close to the shell as possible for controlled sound and easy tuning.

Meinl's three new cajons each feature a rubberwood resonating body and a padded sitting surface. One cajon is fronted in white ash, and features adjustable top corners and internal snare wires. A second features a maka burl front piece and a built-in sizzle effect. The third cajon is fitted with a fiberglass front piece and a sizzle effect.

www.meinlcymbals.com,
www.meinlpercussion.com.

Mb20 cymbals

Luis Conte Signature congas

Professional cajons

Pacific Drums And Percussion B.O.A. (Bow Oriented Action) bass drum and hi-hat pedals are made of Flex-Tech composite, which allows the footboard to act as the pedal's spring and hinge all in one.

Pacific's all-birch FS entry-level sets now come in Ebony and Red Satin Oil finishes, with suspension tom mounts, a ball-and-socket bass drum mount, Remo heads, and a complete hardware package.

www.pacificdrums.com.

Paiste has added thin crashes to its aggressive, rock-oriented RUDE series, in sizes from 16" to 20".

Paiste has also replaced its 302 through 802 series with new 101 Brass, 201 Bronze, PST 3, and PST 5 lines. PST 5 cymbals use the same bronze alloy as in Paiste's 2002 professional class. PST 3 cymbals are made from an especially sonorous copper-based brass alloy. Both series contain the widest model selection ever offered within their price ranges.

An innovative rack & pinion snare throw-off designed by Jeff Ocheltree is available on Paiste cymbal-alloy snare drums. It will also be offered separately by Paiste for installation on other drums.

www.paiste.com.

Pearl's new Reference Series treats each drum within the kit as a separate instrument in order to maximize its sonic potential. The line incorporates blended birch/maple and mahogany/maple shells in different shell thicknesses, combined with different bearing edges.

The new Joey Jordison signature 6½x13 steel snare drum is said to produce a high pitch with bite, while retaining depth, body, and power. The 5x14 Virgil Donati snare features four outer plies of maple over four inner plies of birch for super-bright tone. The drum is given a rounded top bearing edge and the snare bed used on Pearl's Philharmonic snares for outstanding snare response. It features die-cast hoops and a Smoke Flake finish.

Pearl Percussion's Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez signature copper-plated cowbells feature two playing surfaces: flat on one side, and curved on the other. A two-position cowbell bracket ensures that wing nuts will not get in the way when multiple bells and blocks are stacked on one post.

Also new is the PSA-10 Snare Rake, which allows percussionists to add an adjustable snare effect quickly and easily to congas, djembes, and other ethnic drums. Pearl also offers a portable djembe stand that stays attached to the drum, opening or closing easily with the pull of a knob.

www.pearldrum.com.

Modern Classic snare with Craviotto shell

Premier series Champagne Sparkle kit

Champagne Sparkle is one of four new finishes in **Premier**'s namesake professional drumkit series. Also new are 5½x14 Modern Classic snare drums with single-ply maple and walnut shells by Craviotto. The drums feature Modern Classic bearing edges and snare beds, gold-plated lugs, rims, tension bolts, and serialized badges, and Nickel Drumworks throw-offs.

www.premier-percussion.com.

Pro-Mark's newest Autograph sticks are designed by symphonic percussionist Tim Adams. The TXSE Eclipse features a gradual taper to an elongated wood tip said to create a rich yet quick sound. The TXSxi features a soft curve from the shaft to the tip for light playing in a concert hall or chamber setting.

New in Pro-Mark's accessory line are backpack-style and wheeled cymbal bags, as well as Drum Gum reusable drumhead muffling gel strips.

www.promark.com.

Drum Gum

Backpack and Wheeled cymbal bags

Tim Adams Autograph sticks

Regal Tip's E Series New E series W (wide) models *exactly* duplicate the contours of Regal Tip's wood-tip models in order to provide the same playing feel that wood-tip players are used to, with the added benefit of the E series' unique "slotted" nylon tip.

www.regaltip.com.

Regal Tip E Series

TD-12 module

Remo Crown percussion

Rhythm Party DVD, CD, and Guide Book

Jimmie Morales congas

TD-12S electronic drumkit

Remo's new Crown Percussion entry-level percussion line features conga and bongo drums, large and small plastic blocks, a Two-Tone Wood Block Scraper, a plastic guiro, a cabasa with a steel beaded chain, a Rattle Shake, agogo bells, a Rattle Clap, a Dual Shaker, a metal cylinder shaker, a 6" triangle, and bar chimes.

Also new from Remo are Jimmie Morales Signature Series congas. Their 28" high Acousticon shells are covered using a unique graphic process. The congas are available with both NuSkyn and FiberSkyn 3 Tucked Type 7 drumheads.

In drumheads, CyberMax pipe-band drumheads combine Remo's DuraLock technology and Aramid fiber material to provide a crisp, clear attack and a wide range of dynamic variations either indoors or outdoors.

Remo's *Rhythm Party* DVDs, CDs, and Guide Book/CDs are designed to make playing percussion accessible and fun. The Guide Book/CD can be used in any educational setting. The DVDs include instructions on notation and time signatures for use individually or in a classroom setting.

www.remo.com.

Roland's V-Stage series TD-12S is a performance-oriented electronic kit. It features mesh drum pads, and a TD-12 drum module that shares the sound quality of the TD-20 module. The VH-11 floating hi-hat mounts on a standard hi-hat stand (not included) for a natural feel, while the 10" snare drum pad offers positional sensitivity. The kit includes the MDS-12 drum stand, with which offers the ability to conceal cabling inside the tubes.

Roland has also introduced the RMP-3 Rhythm Coach, which is said to be loaded with exercises and timekeeping tools. The mesh pad and brain are contained in one molded piece for portability and convenience.

www.rolandus.com.

Sabian's Vault Artisan ride is said to produce a glassy and well-defined stick "click," with "an aggressive hotbed of dirtied-up, dark-edged tone bubbling underneath." It's also claimed to have a piercing bell and great crash capability. The ride is available in 20" and 22" Light and Medium models, in natural and brilliant finish.

Also new from Sabian are prepacks in the XS20 series of affordable B20 bronze cymbals. The XS20 First Pack contains a 16" medium-thin crash and a choice of either 13" or 14" hi-hats. The XS20 2-Pack contains 14" hi-hats and an 18" crash ride.

www.sabian.com.

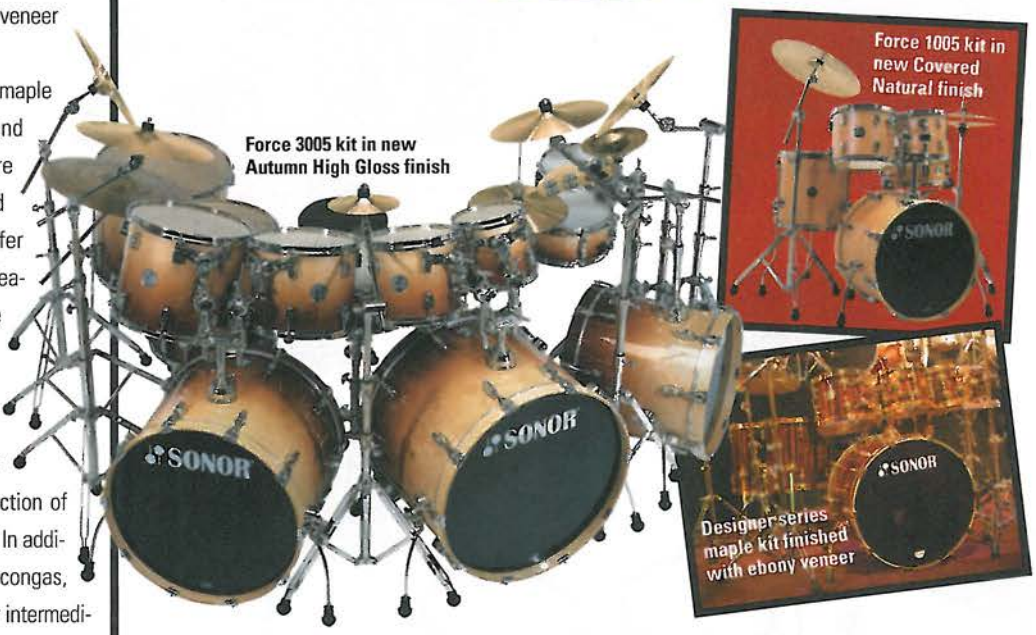
Vault Artisan ride

The **Sonor** Designer Series special-edition kit shown at lower right is finished in a striped ebony veneer over maple shells.

Sonor's Force 3005 series now offers full maple shells, two additional bass drum sizes, and three new finishes. Force 2005 kits feature full birch shells, new bass drum claws, and two new finishes. Force 1005 kits now offer wood or optional steel snare drums, and feature Force tension lugs with Sonor's Tune Safe feature. Force 505 kits have an updated tom holder and are available in two new finishes.

Sonor's percussion line now includes steel and brass timbales, along with a new selection of cowbells, agogo bells, shakers, and maracas. In addition, the Champion series of congas, mini-congas, bongos, and djembes has been introduced for intermediate or beginner players.

www.hohnerusa.com, www.sonor.com.



Force 3005 kit in new Autumn High Gloss finish

Force 1005 kit in new Covered Natural finish

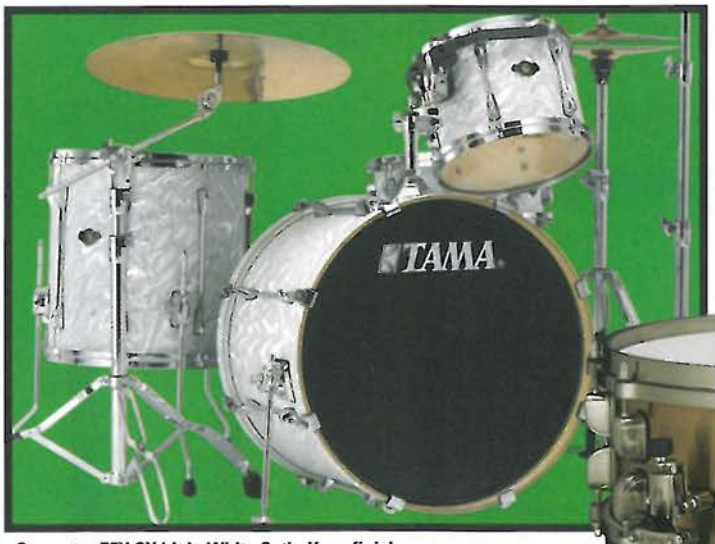
Designer series maple kit finished with ebony veneer

Tama's completely new Superstar line features drums of birch with a basswood inner ply. Kits feature die-cast hoops, the Star-Cast mounting system, and high-tension lugs with a low-contact Sound Bridge design.

Three new Starclassic bell brass snare drums feature 3 mm-thick bell brass shells, zinc die-cast hoops, and brushed nickel hardware.

Tama's Roadpro cymbal stands and booms now feature Quick-Set toothless tilters that utilize a special multi-disk clutch to provide more stability than that of standard toothless tilters, while still retaining the traditional tilter size and simplicity.

www.tama.com.



Superstar EFX SX kit in White Satin Haze finish

Starclassic bell brass snare

Custom Deluxe fiberglass congas

Piccolo Cabasa Shaker

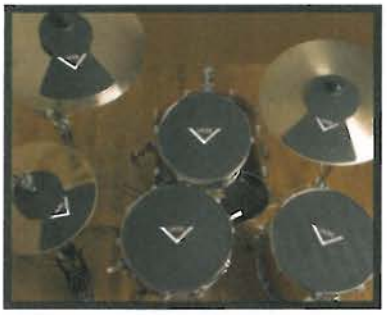
Players series Tattoo congas

Toca's Custom Deluxe fiberglass professional congas and bongos are available in Champagne and Marine Blue Sparkle finishes, with Afro Cuban–shaped shells topped with bison heads. High-luster chrome hardware, including Toca's Easy Play rims, complements the retro glitter finishes.

Players series affordable congas and bongos now come with a Tattoo pattern over a blond or Cherry Stain wood shell. Congas are fitted with bison heads, Easy Play hoops, and black powder-coated hardware.

The Piccolo Cabasa Shaker is smaller and easier to manage than a conventional cabasa, and can double as a shaker. Its nickel-plated steel beads are said to be capable of producing a graduated range of timbres.

www.kamanmusic.com.



Noise Guard pads

Splashstick Lite

Vater's Splashstick Lite has smaller-diameter dowels than the original Splashstick for lighter weight, smaller grip size, and a warm acoustic tonality. The extended rubber grip leaves 4" of the dowels exposed and gives a stick-like feel with durability in the rimshot area.

Vater Noise Guard pads allow for quiet practice on a drumkit. Each pad is made from non-slip rubber that is claimed to not compromise rebound.

www.vater.com.

Vic Firth now offers Joe Porcaro series sticks (based on Joe's former Diamond Tip brand) in hickory and maple, along with a new Collectible series with licensed imagery from various rock groups and major universities.

www.vicfirth.com.

Collectible series sticks

Vic Firth Joe Porcaro series sticks

Yamaha Dave Weckl 5½x13 and 5½x14 snare drums are constructed with 7-ply maple shells. Both feature Yamaha Nouveau lug casings and a dual-strainer system. Players can remove one or the other, quickly switching back and forth between loose and tight snare sounds.

Manu Katché's 5½x14 and 6½x14 signature snares have shells of matte black plated brass, with 20-strand snares, zinc die-cast hoops on the top of the drum, and aluminum die-cast hoops on the bottom. Paul Leim's 6½x14 and 5½x14 drums feature brass shells, one-piece gold-plated lugs, aluminum die-cast hoops, and 30-strand snares. Also new from Yamaha are a wide variety of distinctive finishes for high-end drums, including the hand-painted Embossed Blue finish on the Absolute Maple Nouveau kit shown here.

Yamaha's DTXPLORER five-piece kit comes complete with an FP-6110 bass drum pedal and coded cabling snake for quick and easy setup. The sound module is equipped with a 16-bit/32-note polyphony tone generator, plus a selection of digital onboard effects. The module also includes the Groove Check practice feature and simple "plug and play" connections.

www.yamahadrums.com.

Absolute Maple Nouveau kit in Embossed Blue finish, Manu Katché, Paul Leim, and Dave Weckl snares.

DTXPLORER electronic kit

Zildjian's K Custom Series now includes 13" K Custom Special Dry hi-hats and a 20" K Custom Session ride. The medium-thin top and medium bottom hi-hat cymbals feature special hammering and lathing techniques to produce a dry, crisp sound, and a cutting "chick." The 13" diameter offers a faster, higher-pitched alternative to the original 14" model.

The medium-thin, unlathed 20" K Custom Session ride is said to offer more sustain and a lower pitch than the original 18" K Custom Session ride. It's also claimed to produce a clean, articulate stick sound, controllable wash with complex overtones, a bright, cutting bell sound, and dry, short crashes.

Zildjian's Travis Barker Double adds a seamless felt mallet head to the butt-end of the Travis Barker Artist series hickory drumstick. In addition to standard drumstick playing, the Travis Barker Double is said to be ideal for cymbal swells and muted tom fills.

Also new from Zildjian sticks are Super 5A and Super 5B Anti-Vibe and purple DIP models, available in wood and nylon-tip versions.

www.zildjian.com.

20" K Custom Session ride and 13" K Custom Special Dry hi-hats

Super 5A and 5B Anti-Vibe and DIP sticks, and the Travis Barker Double mallet/stick

Of Special Interest

Bauer Percussion from Brazil offers professional sets in their Finest Hand Craft series. This kit features an Amazon Green lacquer finish, and is equipped with unique lugs, stands, and multi-clamps.

Bauer DW Classic congas (top row in photo) are made of Brazilian rose cedar wood, and are fitted with rawhide heads and heavy-duty tuning hardware for professional sound and durability. Bauer Series congas (bottom row) are made of marupá wood for affordability and a balanced sound.

www.bauerpercussion.com.

Beato Pro 3 and Pro 4 bags offer professional-level features at extremely affordable prices.

www.universalpercussion.com.

Brady offers new brush box (shown here) and swamp oak exotic finishes on jarrah and marri ply drumkits. In addition, Custom Shop snare drums featuring solid and stained colors, powder-coated hardware, hand-painted graphics, and other options, are available by special order.

www.bradydrums.com.au.

Bosphorus has added an 18" Master crash and a 20" Master/Turk ride to their line. Both feature the dark sound and "wobbling edge" associated with the thinnest cymbals in the Bosphorus range. The unlathed Master/Turk model is said to offer great stick definition without losing the complex spread of a thin ride. The 18" crash is said to decay very quickly, giving way to a warm ride sound.

Also new is the Stanton Moore series. The cymbals feature New Orleans–series lathing on their undersides and traditional lathing on top for a unique sonic character.

www.bosphoruscymbals.com.

A new accessory snare drum, as well as a new black sparkle lacquer finish, grace this kit from **Cadeson**.

www.cadesonmusic.com

Canopus has introduced its first all-birch kit, designed to offer a punchy sound with plenty of attack. This model is finished in a Green Ripple wrap.

www.canopusdrums.com.

Craviotto Unlimited Edition maple snare drums combine solid-shell design with matching top and bottom reinforcing hoops, precisely applied bearing edges, and

a natural satin oil finish. The drums are fitted with chrome-plated Diamond cast lugs, 2.3-mm triple-flanged counterhoops, Craviotto throw-off, butt-plate, and snare wires, and Remo Ambassador drumheads.
www.craviottodrums.com.

Ddrum is a well-known name in electronic percussion. The company has made its debut in the acoustic drum field as well with a full line of entry-level to professional kits in maple, birch/basswood, mahogany, and acrylic.
www.armadilloent.com.

Unusual segment-shell snare drums are the specialty of **Drum Solo**. The hand-crafted 4x6 and 4x18 snares shown here are a study in contrast.
www.drumsolo.cc.

Dunnett's MonoPly J Class Exotic Wood snares feature woods like Hawaiian koa, albino rosewood, mango, and bubinga. The drums feature exceptionally thin single-ply shells for diverse tonality and extended tuning range.
www.dunnett.com.

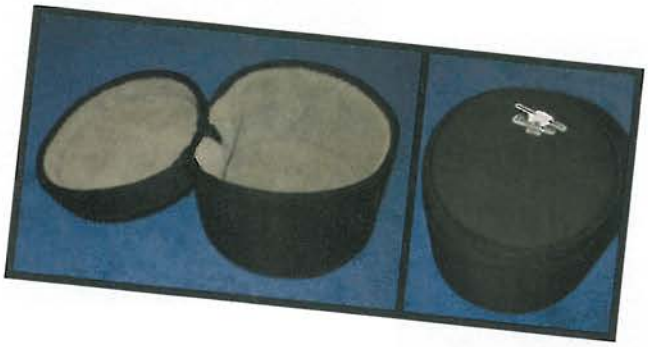
The Hi-Hat Jingler is a new percussion item from **Factory Metal Percussion**. It's a 4"-diameter Celtic Bell fitted with tambourine jingles. It can slip over a hi-hat's pull rod, or be attached to the rod via a standard clutch for more action.
www.factorymetalpercussion.com.

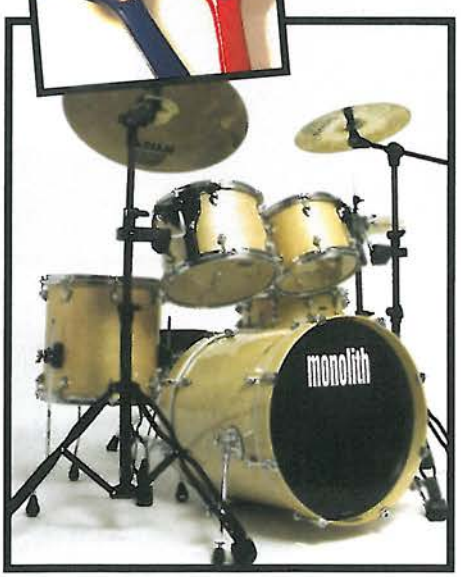
Fibes has expanded its finish range with new Red, White, and Blue Diamond Pearl wraps.
www.fibes.com.

This new all-birch kit from **GMS** features Special Edition lugs and a distinctive Gila Monster Green lacquer finish.
www.gmsdrums.com.

The **Gon Bops** brand of percussion products is now a division of Drum Workshop. The line includes Tumbao and California series congas, bongos, and timbales, as well as conga cajons, bells, blocks, and other percussion accessories.
www.dwdrums.com.

Hart Dynamics has joined with Open Labs, a designer of computer-based music production solutions, to co-develop the industry's first electronic drumkit that can play software plug-ins and applications. Hart's professional electronic kits can now work with the ODX computer system to control different musical keyboard devices and software packages through a single interface.
www.hartdynamics.com.





Drum Seeker bags are new from **Humes & Berg**. They feature plush interior padding, as well as hard inserts on the tops and bottoms to protect the heads of the drums they contain.

www.humes-berg.com.

The 25th Anniversary ride from **Istanbul Agop** features a 20½" size, as well as special ingredients added to the alloy to give the cymbal a classic sound. In other news, Istanbul Agop has added splash models to all of its cymbal lines.

www.istanbulcymbals.com,
www.alchemycymbals.com.

The mapa burl wood-hoop snare drum at left is a surprise from the **Istanbul Mehmet** cymbal company. The drum's 8-ply shell, hoops, and hardware are all handmade in Turkey.

Istanbul Mehmet has also introduced a totally new cymbal line called EFES. Touting the theme of "traditional technology," the cymbals are available in 16" through 22" sizes.

www.istanbulmehmet.com.

Keller Products has added steam-bent single-ply maple snare shells to its Vintage shell line. The 5½x14 shells are designed to help manufacturers and players emulate the sounds of the 1930s and '40s. They come ready to sand and finish, with 30° bearing edges and reinforcement hoops.

www.kellerproducts.com, www.kelleratthecore.com.

Monolith Profile Series drumsets are said to offer quality and innovation at affordable prices. The 6-ply hardwood shells have a satin lacquer finish available in a variety of colors. A new lug design and the Nexus G2 Colors Universal Mounting System complete the package.

Nexus G2 Colors mounts are based on the carbon fibre Nexus G2 Universal Mounting System. Their composite construction and sound-enhancement characteristics remain the same as the original, with the added option of black, silver, red, white, and blue available colors.

www.monolithdrums.com.

This meticulously hand-made, segment-shell djembe tops **Mountain Rythym**'s djembe line. At the opposite end of the price range, the company is now importing authentic carved djembes from Africa for the entry-level market.

www.mountainrythym.com.

On **MRP** Performer series maple kits, small drums feature thick shells, which is said to increase the pitch, volume, and tone of the drum. Larger drums feature thinner shells in order to emphasize the drums' lower frequencies.

MRP also offers the Lightspeed double pedal. It's said to be exceptionally fast and responsive.

www.mrpdrums.com.

This short-stack kit from Brazil's **Odery Drums** is fitted with an additional bass drum woofer. The kit features shells of araucaria wood, as well as Odery's machined bronze hardware.

www.odery.com.br.

The **Off-Set** double pedal's design places the pedals equally to the left and right of the double beaters, allowing the drummer to sit directly behind the bass drum. The pedal features independent footboard/beater-throw adjustments, as well as a centered hoop clamp.

www.thepointtremolo.com.

This Illuminated Hybrid 7x14 snare drum from **Orange County Drum & Percussion** combines wood and acrylic shell segments with a light source to create a distinctive look. Another original design is a 7x14 snare with a Louis Vuitton designer graphic finish.

www.ocdrum.com.

From Brazilian cymbalmaker **Orion**'s Exotica series comes this unusual stand-mounted Placa Tupa soundsheet. The company has also debuted a high-powered Strondo series, including this 18" crash.

www.orioncymbals.com.br.

Peace's DNA Standard series drums feature all-maple, 7-ply shells. Four new Atomic Sparkle lacquer finishes include the Strawberry Fields finish shown at near right. Peace also offers large bass drums—like the 26" drum on the Tangerine Sparkle kit shown at lower right—in their Paragon high-end line.

In hardware, the new Velocity Nitro-Drive double pedal utilizes a new cam design and locking mechanism said to provide a smoother action than that of previous models. It comes in a hard-side carrying bag.

www.peacemusic.com.tw.

Pork Pie has ventured into the acrylic-drum arena with their Piglite series, available in ten colors. The drums are said to have more "bite" than wood drums do, along with exceptional low end. This kit features large drums, including an 18x26 bass drum.

www.porkpiedrums.com.

Puresound Percussion has added 5x14 brass and stainless steel models to its line of Ultrasonic metal-shell snare drums. Each drum features chromed brass tube lugs, a deluxe throw-off, and a heavy-duty padded drumbag.

Also available are Vintage model snare wire sets for Sonor Z series, Radio King extended, Slingerland Zoomatic, and Slingerland Snapshot snare strainers.

www.puresoundpercussion.com.

The elaborate setup at left showcases **RMV**'s new hi-gloss lacquer finish options. RMV kits are now available as full sets, shell packs without hardware, and shell packs without snare drums, in order to give customers more purchasing options.

RMV has added the E90DP double bass drum pedal to their Eclipse drum hardware series. It features sealed bearings, low-mass composite footboards, variable spring-tension and stroke-position adjustments, a chain & sprocket drive system, and a double universal-joint linkage assembly.

www.rmv.com.br.

Samson's C01U USB studio condenser features USB (Universal Serial Bus) connectivity for PC-based recording. The mic' can record directly into a digital audio workstation program anywhere the user's computer is, with no interface boxes or computer pre-amps required. It features a 19-mm internal shock-mounted diaphragm with a cardioid pickup pattern for studio-quality recordings.

www.samsontech.com.

Along with the classic red sparkle Tour series kit shown here, **Slingerland** is offering Studio King kits and Radio King snare drums, all with historic Slingerland lugs, badges, and other features. All drums are custom orders, for which the company promises delivery in four weeks.

www.slingerland.com.

Hybrid-shell drums from **Spaun** are available with acrylic center sections and wood outer sections, or with those sections reversed. Each configuration offers a different tonality as well as a different look. The kit shown here features a Reptile finish with green powder-coated hardware.

www.spaundrums.com.

Stagg now offers a full line of roto-molded plastic drum cases. The stackable cases feature innovative shapes and heavy-duty features.
www.emdmusic.com.

The ACS Accessory Clamp System from **Taye** features a multi-clamping, multi-booming array of options, including a way to attach a cymbal holder to a floor tom leg. Other innovations include new bass drum claws, an omnidirectional modular tom clamp, and bass drum spurs with a SpringFlex design to maximize bass drum resonance.
www.taye.com.

The Infinitree from **TreeWorks** is nearly 4' in length. The 140-bar instrument can produce extended sweeps, while the double-row design allows the front row to be played separately for greater dynamic range. A two-part design makes it collapsible for transport, and also allows each side (high or low) to be used as a stand-alone chime.
www.treeeworkschimes.com.

This aluminum kit from **Trick Drums** features a Millusion finish. It employs a unique machining process to create holographic depth and flame patterns. Also new from Trick are quick-release cymbal toppers with die-cast character "heads."
www.trickdrums.com.

Turn It Up & Lay It Down: The Book from **Warner Bros. Publications** is an instructional companion to *Volume 1* of the play-along bass CD series of the same name. The book, written by drummer/educators Joe Bergamini and Kevin Fuhrman, gives basic, intermediate, and advanced groove options that can be played with each track. An accompanying CD contains various groove styles.
www.warnerbrospublications.com.

This modular trap case from **XL Specialty Percussion**'s Protechtor line features a removable snare drum insert, a separate hardware tray, a cymbal compartment, a foldaway handle, and luggage wheels.
www.xlspec.com.

And What's More

1. Ace Products offers this extra-large stick/mallet bag in a leather-like finish. It features an oversized outside pocket and a padded shoulder strap.
www.aceproducts.com.

2. New instructional titles from **Alfred Publishing** include (clockwise from top left) *Kid's Drum Course* by Dave Black and Steve Houghton, *The Erskine Method* by Peter Erskine, and *The Amazing Jamnasium* and *Together In Rhythm* by Kalani.
www.alfredpub.com.

3. This Baris series ride is among the Turkish-made cymbals offered by **Anatolian**.
www.anatoliancymbals.com.

4. Anvil Cases has introduced a sound-reflecting disk called The Wafer. It's designed to be placed under a snare drum stand to prevent sound from being absorbed by drum rugs or carpeted stages.
www.anvilcase.com.

5. The System 1 miking system for vibraphones is new from **Applied Microphone Technology**.
www.appliedmic.com.

6. Audio Technica offers this AT4050 studio condenser mic' for drum recording.
www.audio-technica.com.

7. The **Audix** CX-112 condenser microphone (for drum overhead use) features a 28-mm gold sputtered diaphragm with a film thickness of only .006 mm. The capsule housing is mounted on a silicon rubber support to absorb external shock and allow the mic' to more accurately depict incoming sound waves.
www.audixusa.com.

8. Avlex is a new brand of mic's made in China. Their line includes this F5H3 eight-piece drumset-miking kit.
www.avlex.com.

9. Upgraded hardware in the **Basix** line includes an improved DPD-800 double pedal and a totally new single pedal design.
www.basixpercussion.com.

10. Beyerdynamic offers a new clamp for their Opus 88 drum mic'.
www.beyerdynamic.com.

11. New accessory items from **Big Bang Distribution** include Mr. Zog's Sex Wax (for drumstick grip), Crazy John's hardware polish (with a new formula and new packaging), and Tommy Lee Signature Ahead drumsticks in a new silver/gray color.
www.bigbangdist.com.

12. New in **Blue Microphones**' Ball series is the Kick Ball bass drum mic', shown here in Blue's Ringer shock mount.
www.bluemic.com.

13. The e100-2 from **CAD** is an all-purpose studio mic' said to work for everything from overheads to kick drums. The PMP742C percussion miking pack comes with four TSM411 drum mic's, two ICM417 condenser overhead mic's, and a KBM412 kick mic', all in a sturdy metal suitcase.
www.cadmics.com.

14. A variety of "rod"-style playing tools are new from **Carbostick**. They feature dowels of composite material for extra durability and bright sound. Some models feature a "splayed" design that softens the impact while providing a springy rebound action.
www.carbostick.de

15. Book and DVD versions of Rick Latham's *Advanced Funk Studies* and Ed Soph's *Musical Time* are available from **Carl Fischer**.
www.carlfischer.com.

16. Clearsonic now offers 16" x 22" acrylic panels, along with new 18" height extenders, to create more flexible drum-isolation setups.
www.clearsonic.com.

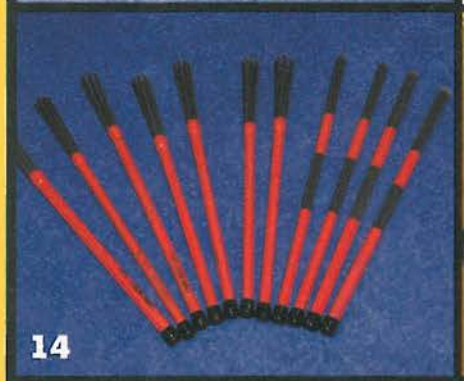
17. Casablanca is a new company offering a selection of imported instruments—including doumbeks like these—from Morocco and Egypt.
www.casapercussion.com.

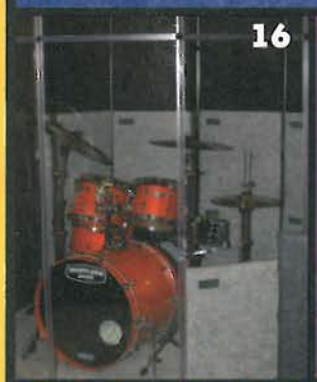
18. CODA Drums now offers a complete line of entry-level congas, bongos, djembes, bells, and tambourines.
www.themusiclink.com.

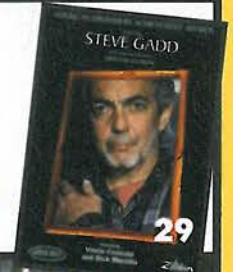
19. Coda Holdings has redesigned their modular drumstick system for improved stick rigidity and performance. The sticks can be tailored to the user's preference of tip shape, balance, and overall weight, and can also be converted from sticks to mallets or brushes.
www.hkcoda.com.

20. These stick holders from **Danmar** feature the logo from Travis Barker's Famous Stars And Straps clothing line, along with "punker plaid" finish.
www.danmarpercussion.com.

21. DB Musical Instruments has upgraded their drumkit line to offer more professional features. This kit has a cream lacquer finish and gold-colored hardware and stands.
www.db-musical.com.







22. The Phat Foot, from **Drayton Productions**, is a portable anchor device that connects the drummer's throne legs to the undersides of bass drum and hi-hat pedals, preventing them from sliding away even on hard surfaces.
www.phatfoot.com.

23. Drum Connection offers handmade 5-ply maple drums, like this kit finished in gold leaf.
www.dccalifornia.com.

24. Following a year of development, **Drum Tech** has finalized the design of their DTS cable-operated one-touch tuning system. It can be retrofitted to virtually any brand of drumkit.
www.drumtech.com.

25. This four-piece EPX practice kit from **E-Pad Enterprises** combines their Enduraflex practice pads with a tubular rack for stability and positioning flexibility.
www.epadco.com.

26. New from **Gator Cases** is a line of roto-molded polyethylene drum cases featuring padded inserts that are riveted as well as glued for extra durability. The cases come in Standard and Fusion sets and in thirteen individual sizes.
www.gatorcases.com.

27. Terry O'Mahoney's *Motivic Drumset Soloing* book/CD package explains the various compositional devices that made Max Roach's and other "melodic" drummers' solos so effective. It's new from **Hal Leonard**.
www.halleonard.com

28. HQ Percussion RealFeel pads have been improved with a powder-coated medium-density fiberboard base. The pads feature the same natural gum rubber playing surface, with a new injection-molded, three-color logo.
www.hqpercussion.com.

29. The latest offering from **Hudson Music** is a DVD of the *American Drummers Achievement Awards Honoring Steve Gadd*.
www.hudsonmusic.com

30. Impact's HT-1 Hardware Transport bag has been improved with a steel baseplate, scuff guards, and a zipper design that allows the bag to be loaded from the top or from the front.
www.impactind.com.

31. This bird's-eye maple kit custom-created for jazz great Jimmy Cobb is an example of the Virtuoso series by **Innovation Drums**. It includes a matching single-ply snare drum personalized with a tribute plaque on the outside and photos of Jimmy on the inside.
www.innovationdrums.com.

32. This unusually complex cocktail kit with an attractive wood-veneer finish is from **Lazer Drums**. They also offer a standard-size Keith Jones model wood-hoop kit.
www.keithjonesmusic.com.

33. MC Drums from Italy offer custom-crafted drums in a variety of hardwoods and drumkit configurations.
www.mcdrums.it.

34. Mel Bay's catalog includes several new percussion-related books, including two by jazz drummer Mat Marucci, as well as Dawn Richardson's *Fill Workbook*.
www.melbay.com.

35. Peavey's PV series junior kit features solid wood construction and a reinforced drum stool, and is targeted at small, energetic players.
www.peavey.com.

36. This Acoustech acoustic/electronic kit from **Pintech** combines mesh heads and electronic triggers with real drum shells and electronic cymbal pads.
www.edrums.com.

37. This **Pro Tec** student snare-kit bag features wheels and a telescoping handle.
www.ptcases.com.

38. The RU1450 five-octave marimba from **Ross Mallet Instruments** features a chrome-plated accessory crossbar that allows accessories to be mounted in front of and on the sides of the instrument. Its Prolon keyboard makes it affordable and practical for drum corps and marching band while still maintaining an appropriate sound for indoor concert settings.
www.rossmallets.com.

39. The S-Hoop drum rim from **Safehoop** extends up and into the drumhead area. The hoops are said to be a compromise between die-cast and rolled steel hoops for improved drum tone and tuneability.
www.safehoop.com.

40. Sageman Drums offers a limited edition of Grateful Dead Steel Your Face djembes, in four sizes. This model is autographed by The Dead's Bob Weir.
www.sagemandrums.com.

41. An extensive line of student, professional, and exotic cajons hand-made from a variety of woods has been debuted in the US by **Santa Fe Drums** of Spain.
www.santafedrums.com.

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42. The MelodyWave from **Schulmerich Bells** is a combination of wireless MIDI trigger/batons and a base station. It can be used by choirs, ensembles, or classes to trigger virtually any sounds, from a piano keyboard to a complete orchestra.
www.melodywave.net

43. Shure's Beta drum mic' collection includes the Beta 98 clip-on condenser mic', which now is fitted with its own in-line transformer/cable connector.
www.shure.com.

44. Silverfox's Rock Steady sticks are 16" long and .535" in diameter, with a long taper to an acorn bead for balance, power, and punch. The Fat Boy model was designed for heavy hitters who desire a beefy stick that's easy to control. It's 16¼" long and .610" in diameter, with a medium taper to an acorn bead.
www.silverfoxpercussion.com, www.groverpro.com.

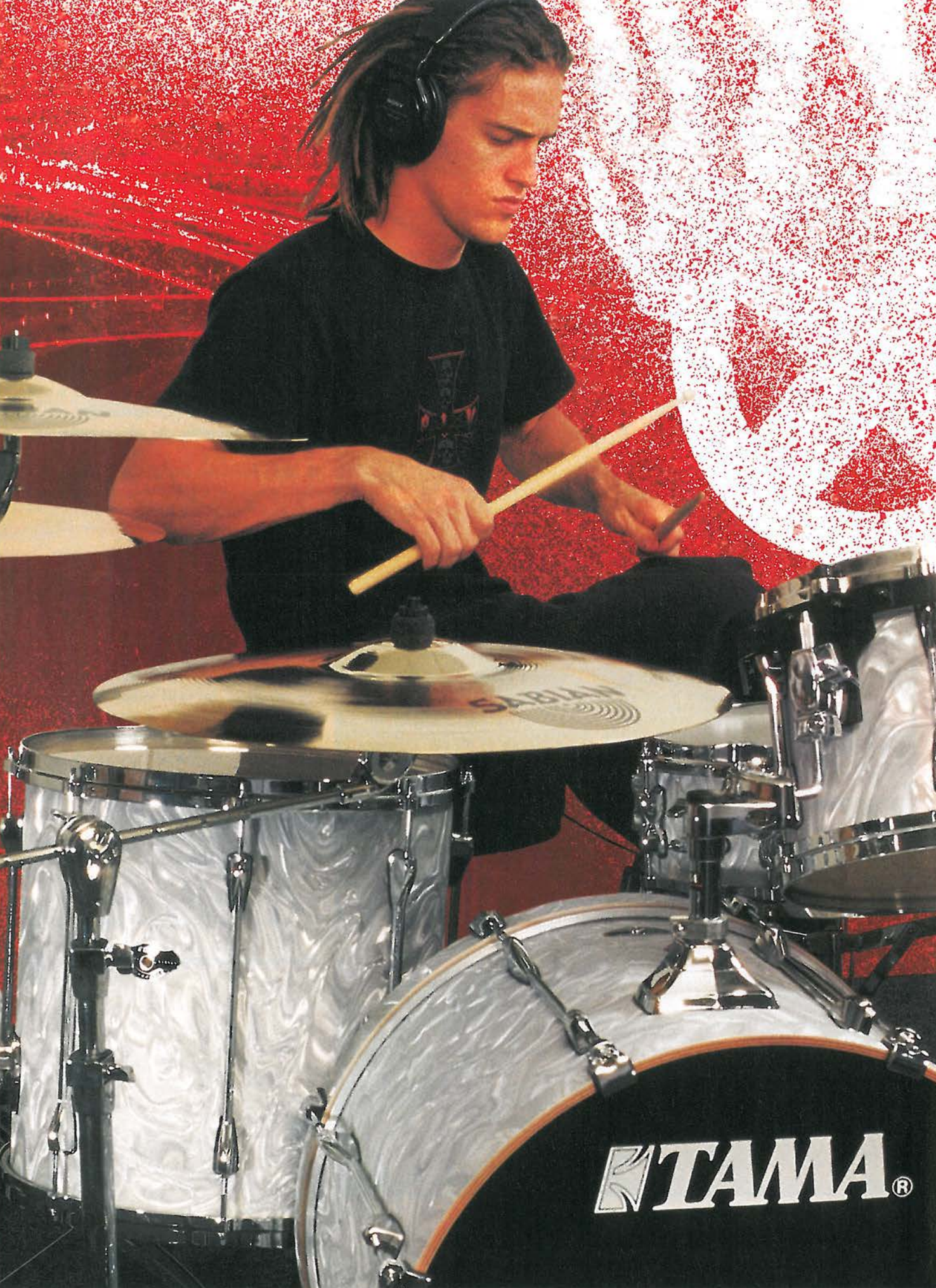
45. SKB's line of roto-molded marching drum cases now includes a wheeled case for quad and quint multi-tom sets.
www.skbcases.com.

46. Soultone is the new name for Turkish-made cymbals introduced last year under the Buzin brand. They offer a full range of hand-made professional models.
www.soultonecymbals.com.

47. Truth Drums offers custom kits like this combination-shell design. The wood sections are finished in turquoise glass glitter, while the acrylic section has a matching tint. Truth also offers a Chamber snare, vented from the inside to the outside around the shell.
www.truthdrums.com

48. Turkish Cymbals offer several hand-made lines, including this ride from their Golden Legend series.
www.turkishcymbals.com

49. This riveted China cymbal from **Wuhan** can be used as a funky ride or to achieve an aggressive crash sound.
www.universalpercussion.com.


SABIAN
TAMA®

TAMA
THE STRONGEST NAME IN DRUMS

SUPERSTAR

More Than Just Attitude™

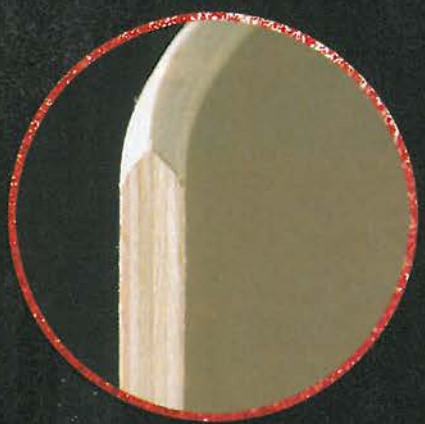
Are the new SUPERSTARS more than just an out front rock and roll attitude? We asked NICK OSHIRO of STATIC X

"I was impressed. We took the kit out of the boxes, tweaked and tuned it a little bit, and it just dialed in right away. It was amazing–it sounds like an expensive kit, if that means anything. Definitely the set can take a punch because I was whaling on it. The drums have a lot of bite and attack–and attack is something I look for–that and the underlying tone–and the Superstar shells have some nice warmth. Using the same Star-Cast mounting system I have on my Starclassic Maple drums was brilliant. The toms have complete isolation–nothing touches the lugs or the shell, and I think that makes this kit sing. Even the finish looks high dollar. Actually, I want one. I'd like to take one out on tour and see what it can do. It's a brilliant kit."

Superstar Birch Shells

"I've noticed a lot of other drums in this range just don't have as much attack as the Superstar. Attack is something I look for–that and the underlying tone."

For superior attack and projection, Superstar drums feature birch shells fitted with an inner ply of basswood (and an outer ply of basswood on the lacquer finished Superstar Custom SL).



Star-Cast Mounting System With Die-Cast Hoops

"I've always thought that the Star-Cast mounting system is the best isolation system out there. The toms have complete isolation –nothing touches the lugs or the shell."

Soundbridge Low-Mass High-Tension Lugs

"I've never had a TAMA kit that was so out of range that it needed more than a little bit of tweaking. I was impressed with this kit because it was practically ready to go right out of the box. That's amazing, actually."

Low-mass, high-tension Soundbridge lugs offer superior tuning stability and extra shell protection during transport–without the loss of resonance associated with old fashioned power lugs. Incredibly precise bearing edges offer easier tuning while augmenting the power and attack of the birch shells.

Pre-Pack Superstar Kits Include FREE Drummer's Accessory Bag!
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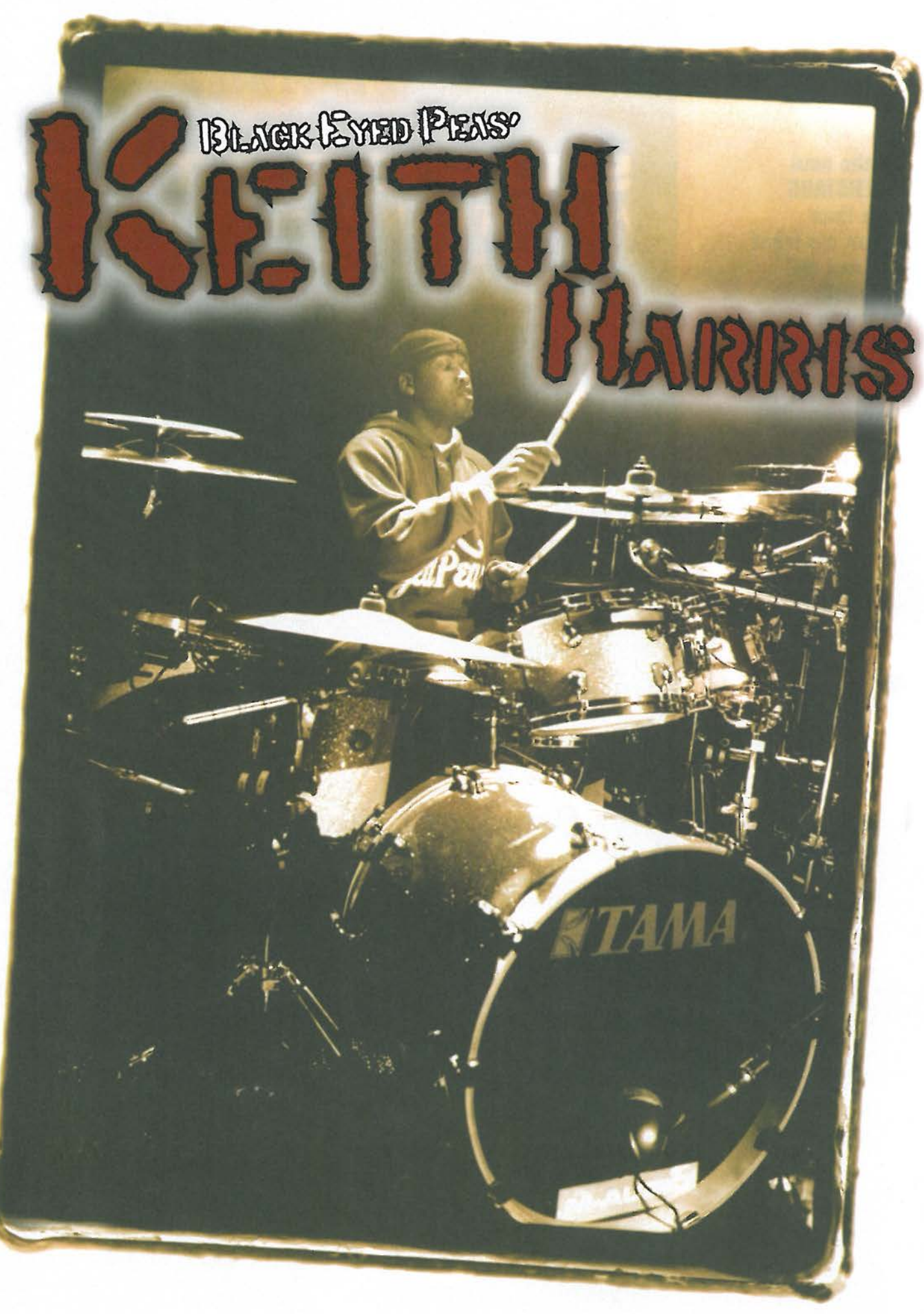
Black Eyed Peas'

Keith Harris



POCKET COMES FIRST

Story by David John Farinella
Photos by Alex Solca

Any musician's first tour is a special memory—usually several months on the road with friends playing in front of a few interested fans. A lucky performer might head overseas for a run of shows. And that must have been what drummer Keith Harris thought was going to happen when he got the call from Black Eyed Peas musical director Printz Board, asking if he wanted to come along as BEP toured to support *Elephunk*.

If only he knew....

TAMA

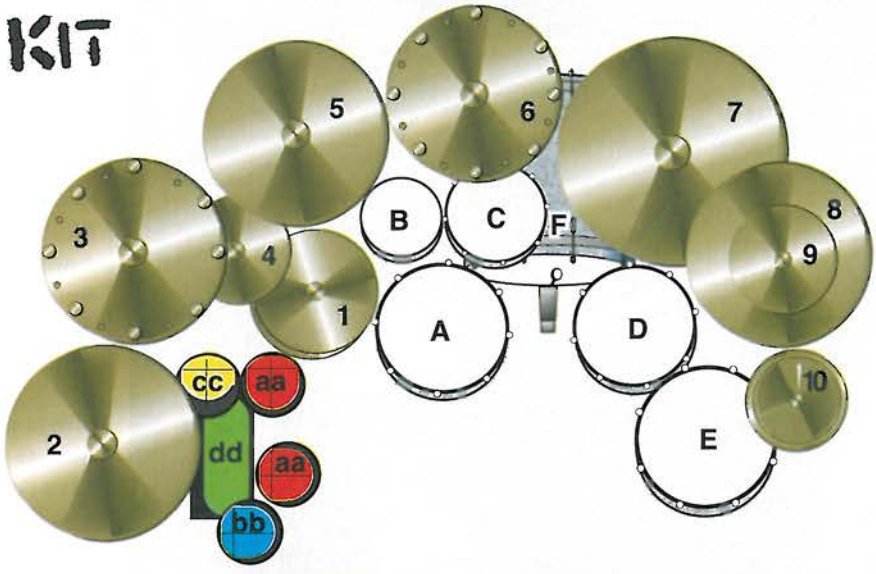
In 2003, when The Black Eyed Peas released *Elephunk*, it was difficult to predict that the collective of four MCs (Will.I.Am, Apl de Ap, Taboo, and Fergie) and band (guitarist George Pajon Jr. and multi-instrumentalists Tim Izo and Printz Board) was sitting on such a powder keg of success. Yet on the strength of such breakout hit songs as "Where's The Love?," "Hey Mama," and "Let's Get It Started," the band became one of the most in-demand acts of 2004.

Over an eighteen-month period, The Black Eyed Peas played close to *five hundred* shows, including appearances at the 2004 Grammy Awards, the 2004 Democratic National Convention, *Saturday Night Live*, Pepsi Smash, and the 2005 Superbowl, not to mention the many globe-trotting treks that took them across the States and to Australia and Europe. That's quite a first tour.

"We did some three hundred-odd shows last year," Keith Harris says, right before the band is about to play another one-off show in Los Angeles. "Sometimes we'd do three shows a day—and for like seven days straight. We were flying from coast to coast. It was really, really tough, and it was my first tour. I figured if I made it through that, I could make it through anything."

Harris had better get ready to live up to those words. *Monkey Business*, the band's fourth album, is due to be released shortly. "I think this new record, from the songs that we've recorded so far, is more of a coming-out for the band, and it shows our maturity as a whole," Harris insists. "It features all of us playing on it, and I think it has a really good vibe. *Elephunk* fans are going to enjoy it, and I think it's probably going to do even better than that album did."

KEITH'S KIT



Drums: Tama Starclassic in diamond dust finish
A. 6x13 snare
B. 8x8 tom
C. 8x10 tom
D. 10x12 tom
E. 12x14 tom
F. 16x20 bass drum

Cymbals: Sabian
1. 12" custom hi-hats (with jingles attached to bottom cymbal)
2. 18" HHX crash
3. 17" Ozone crash with rivets
4. 10" splash
5. 17" HHX crash
6. 16" Ozone crash with rivets
7. 21" Richie Garcia Signature ride
8. 17" EFX crash
9. 10" Signature Max splash
10. 16" HH China

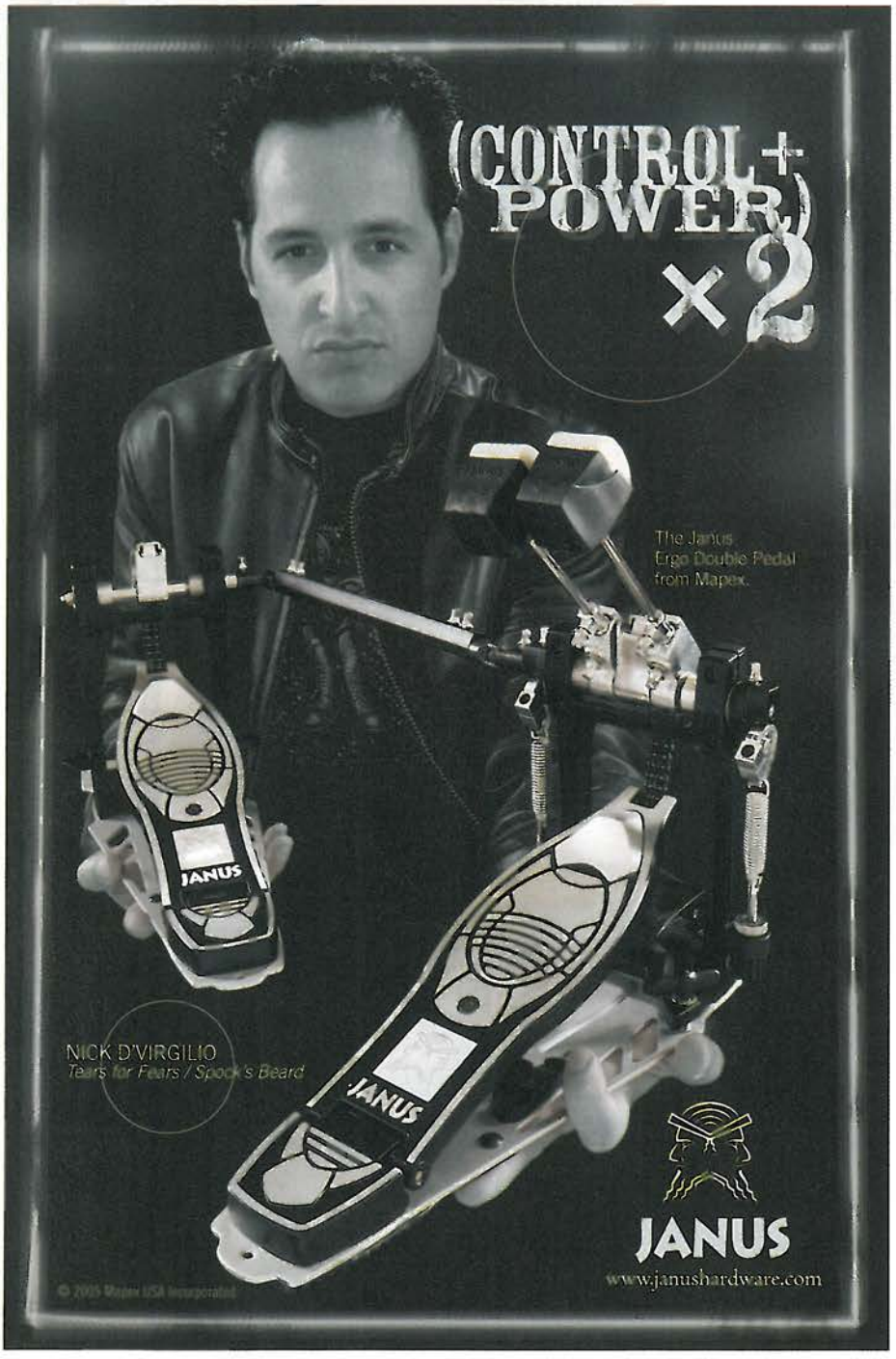
Electronics: ddrum 4SE, triggers on kick and snare
aa. ddrum tom pad
bb. ddrum hi-hat pad
cc. ddrum cymbal pad
dd. ddrum kick pad

Hardware: Tama Iron Cobra pedals
Heads: Aquarian coated Studio X on snare batter, clear Remo Emperors on tom batters, clear Ambassadors on bottoms (toms are tuned slightly higher than shell pitch to cut through Peas music), PowerStroke 3 on kick (Evans pillow for muffling)
Sticks: Pro-Mark signature model (similar to 710 Stinger model)

Keith Harris

Harris, a New York City resident, was first introduced to Printz Board when the musical director was in New York playing a show with Star 69, an act he was producing. In fact, Star 69 was in need of a drummer for a one-off gig. "We had rehearsals at SIR and then did the show at [NYC club] B.B. King's," Harris recalls. "Everything went well and Printz said we should keep in contact. And then, a couple of weeks later, he called me about the Black Eyed Peas gig."

Perhaps Harris should have picked up a clue of what was in store for him upon joining BEP, since the first show he played with them was in front of 20,000 people at the Coachella Music Festival. "Their manager sent me their albums *Behind The Front* and *Bridging The Gap* [*Elephunk* had yet to be released] on a Tuesday—I didn't even have a chance to sit down at the set to practice any of it—they flew me out on a Thursday, we rehearsed two days, and the show was on a Saturday. I had to learn thirteen songs in two days. So I wrote out my little hip-hop charts, my little cheat sheets, and I had them right next to me on the floor, because, of course, no one in hip-hop has a music stand."



Harris survived being thrown to the lions thanks in part to how he got his start behind the kit—playing drums in his church's band. "I come from a Gospel background," he explains. "Having to learn songs fast is part of the everyday life of a church musician doing Gospel music. A lot of times we would do concerts where there was no sheet music and we had thirteen songs in different styles. So just being able to absorb music quickly and keep it locked in is how I've learned to approach music."

In fact, Harris carried the church metaphor into explaining how he relates to the four-MC attack of BEP. "The guys in front are kind of like choir directors," he explains. "In the church, the choir director is the person who directs the choir and the band and keeps everybody on cue. You have to watch all of his movements and sometimes you accentuate those movements, to bring out certain feels in the music. I apply that same concept to BEP music, because it's a live band setting where you always have to listen to what's going on in front of you.

"A lot of times I'm watching them, listening to the lyrics, and trying to Mickey Mouse certain rhythms as well as lock down the groove with the band," Keith continues. "All of those things have to be meshed together to do this gig, and that's why I love it, because it's always spontaneous. We've been playing the same set, give or take, for a year and a half, but every time we play the set it's different. It always has a new energy, because it all depends on how the guys up front spread their energy to the crowd and to us."

The twenty-eight-year-old drummer first started playing nineteen years ago in his church. "I used to sing in the choir, which faced the drums," Keith says. "On Sundays, when the choir would be singing, I wouldn't be, because I was watching the drummer. It was clear to me that that's what I wanted to do."

Henry Jones, the drummer in that church band, ended up teaching Harris the basics of posture, working on his weak hand, and "the decorum and discipline it takes to be a drummer," Keith recalls. "Henry never gave me a sit-down lesson, though, like, 'Okay, this is what you do with your left

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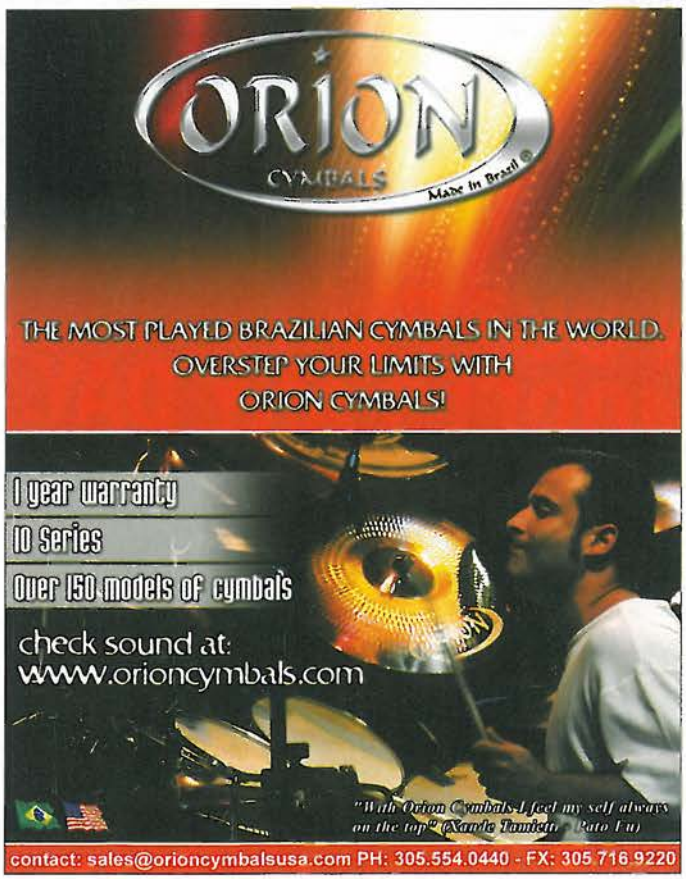
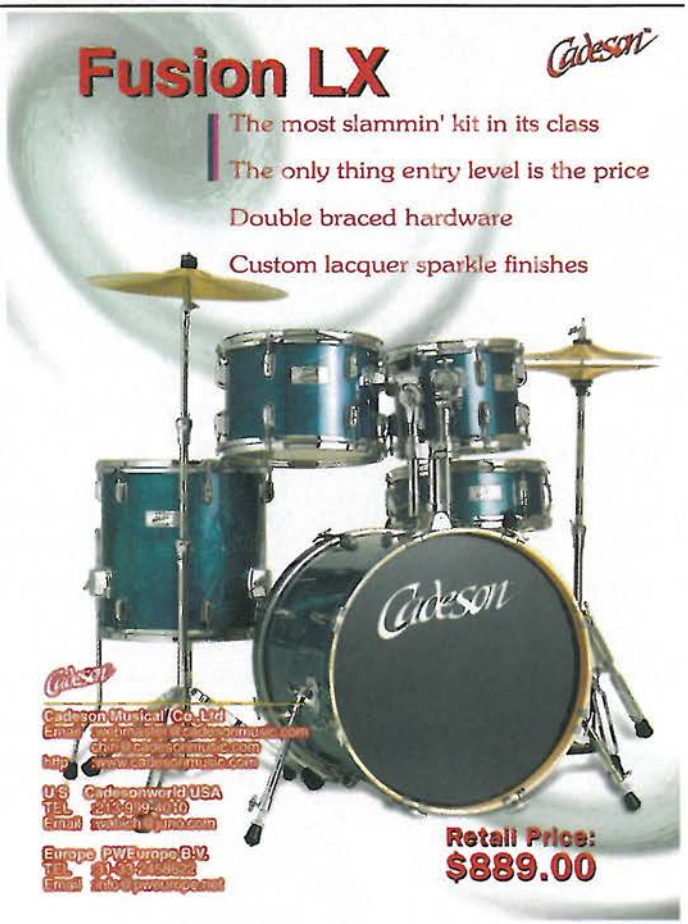
Keith Harris

hand.' I learned by watching him, and then it was on-the-job training—get on the set and play. I had to learn on the spot."

Eventually Harris picked up a Noble & Cooley kit, enrolled in a performing-arts high school in Chicago, and made his way to the prestigious Berklee College of Music, where he earned a degree in music production and engineering. Why the concentration on work behind the glass? "I'm a firm believer in having a Plan B," he admits, laughing. "If I break my right arm, I can still use my left one to program drums or something. I didn't want to go to Berklee to get a degree in performance. Why would I want a degree saying I could play? I'd rather have a degree in something that I could fall back on. In my last year of high school I started to learn about programming, and I fell in love with it. So that's what inspired me to get into the production thing. I always loved being around the studio."

While studying at Berklee, Harris joined a local cover band called Felix Brown. His time with that band helped the drummer on a number of fronts. "We had a wide range of





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songs that we would play in our set," Keith says, "and some of the greatest drummers played some of the songs we did. So getting my parts together on those tunes was great practice for me. I would listen to what the original drummer did and try to learn those licks note for note, as well as incorporating my feel and the Felix Brown feel into it. That's what attracted a lot of people to our band. We would do the songs the way they were originally done, but with a Felix Brown vibe. I also learned a lot of songs that I never would have worked on, which really helped my playing."

In addition to learning how some of the best songs came together from behind the kit, the Felix Brown gig taught Harris about stamina. "We used to play at this place called Dick's Last Resort," Keith explains. "That gig went from 7:00 to midnight with like one break, so we built up a lot of endurance. And the sets were almost continuous for me. A lot of times we would do different songs, but the drums would never stop because the people were dancing. I just segued from one tune to the next. That experience really trained me for The Black Eyed Peas, because we play some pretty intense shows."

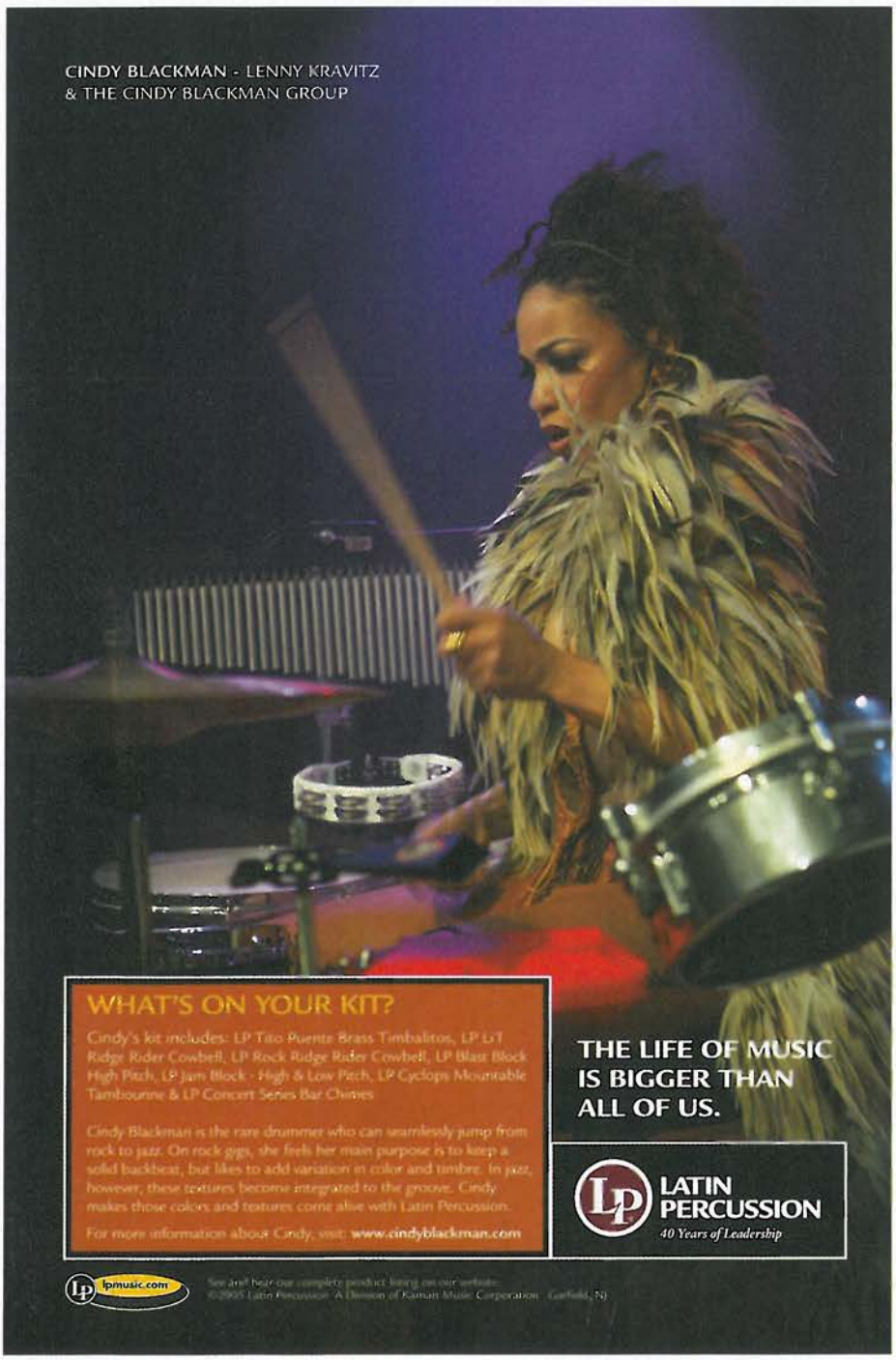
Looking back now, Harris can see how the musical education he received while playing in his church and at Berklee, as well as his time with Felix Brown, helped him become the drummer he is today. "I still feel comfortable playing Gospel music," he says, "because it borrows from a lot of different styles. That definitely opened my ears to Latin and jazz, and even playing different time signatures.

"What I did was take what I learned in the Gospel field and incorporate it into the stuff I learned at Berklee," Harris continues. "I tied all of it together to make it my sound, but not necessarily a Gospel sound. Sometimes people don't like the way Gospel drummers play because they have a certain swing to their drumming. So I had to develop my own sound but still use the things that I learned."

The Harris sound heard in BEP depends mightily on keeping strong time and laying down a tight foundation for the band and the MCs. "I was taught that the pocket comes first," the drummer insists. "I learned to accentuate the groove of the song before anything else. Yes, you've definitely got to have chops, because you can be called upon to do all sorts of crazy stuff. But at the end of the day, you've got to know how to lay it down."

Beyond his musical talents, Harris has had to rely on the technical education he received at Berklee while playing live with BEP, since he must keep the time and the pocket alive in the midst of a number of samples and loops. The specifics of playing with a machine aren't difficult, Harris says. What *is* challenging, he divulges, is the fact that many of the tracks he plays to are slightly out of time. For instance, "Hey Mama" from *Elephunk* boasts an Izo-supplied vocal sample that's not in time. "I have to *make* it in time," Harris says. "If I don't get it right, the whole sample will be thrown off. But I think because of the way we lock in and the way we watch each other as a band, we can get through a lot of that type of stuff."

The ability of Harris, Board, Izo, and Pajon to get through things became critically important during the *Elephunk* tour, considering that they were sending some samples and loops through a Macintosh



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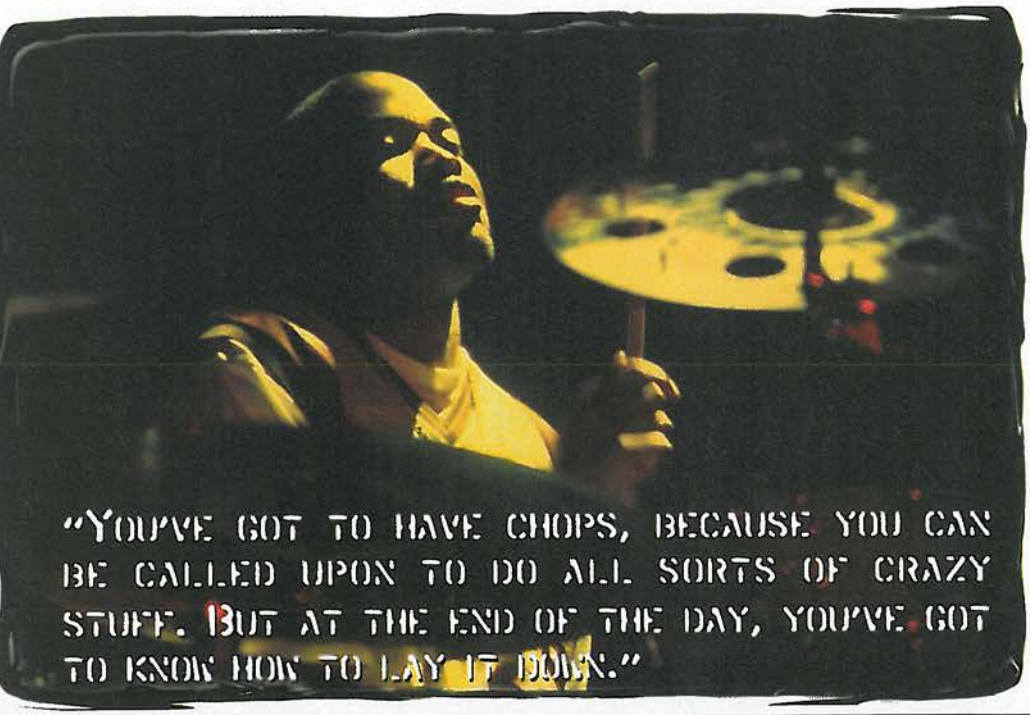
iBook that was running Digidesign Pro Tools with a Digi 002 control surface. "We used that so we could control different mixes, depending on whether we were doing TV or whatever," Keith explains. "If they wanted the vocals louder, for instance, we could do that."

Harris and company learned that the electronics weren't exactly road-tested. "At the VMAs last year one of the pieces of gear caught fire right at soundcheck," Keith relates. "This was three hours before we were supposed to perform. And there have been times when Pro Tools would crash right in the middle of a song. That's a bad thing. On 'Where's The Love?' and 'Labor Day,' we always crossed our fingers. We had so many problems with the technology on those two songs, it was crazy."



Even when the system crashed, according to Harris, the band was able to pick up the song without missing a beat. "That's the beauty of the Black Eyed Peas band. We can do anything. I would look at the guys and say, 'It's gone, we've got to do it ourselves.' So everyone would start playing the sampled parts as well as their regular parts. We'd all just take over and make it a band song again."

Though Harris appreciates the band's ability to get through that type of situation, it's not something that will likely happen again when the band heads out on tour to support *Monkey Business*. On the *Elephunk* tour, Izo was triggering all of the samples from an Akai MPC 2000. "That was cool, because we

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had the samples cut up and we could play them in real time to have more of a feel, in case tempos changed or something like that," Harris explains. "But now we'll each be using Digital Performer to run some of the tracks. I have an electronic rig now, so I can trigger samples and Tim can do his thing as well."

Harris reports that for the next tour, the plan is to beef up the sound of the band to make their performances sound as close to the record as possible. To accomplish this, Harris has added a ddrum trigger setup to his Tama Starclassic Performer kit. "I have two acoustic triggers," he explains, "one on the kick and one on the snare. Sometimes I'll have a sub-kick on the kick drum, and hand claps or something else on the snare."

The new setup will come in handy when the band performs "Dum Diddly" from the new release. "The song is mostly me and Tim," Keith explains, "and from the start he's triggering the whole thing from the MPC. A lot of that song we have to very carefully lock up, because the samples are not really in time. Tim plays certain beats and the vocal samples at the same time. He's triggering the beat on 1 and 3, and he's triggering the vocals on every quarter note. The song has a dance-hall feel to it, so it's not a straight 4/4 beat. There's a lot of drum and percussion parts that are playing along as well, so if that doesn't line up with what we're doing, it'll sound like the record is skipping. I think that's one of the most intricate songs on the new record."

No matter how *Monkey Business* is received, Harris's role in The Black Eyed Peas places him in the unique company of The Roots' ?uestlove as a drummer who plays hip-hop live. "The Roots are pioneers of that," Harris offers. "Much respect to ?uestlove and all the things he's done for the live hip-hop movement. There's a guy who *knows* about the pocket. His grooves are phenomenal. And hip-hop isn't about all the flash and how many notes you can play. It's about the groove."

And that's precisely Keith's role in BEP. "Most of the time the band is feeding off of my energy," he says. "I lay down the foundation for the house, so if I'm grooving well, *everybody* is going to groove well. I just have to make sure that I'm on point. I can't get out of focus and let outside things influence my playing. I have to be in the pocket."

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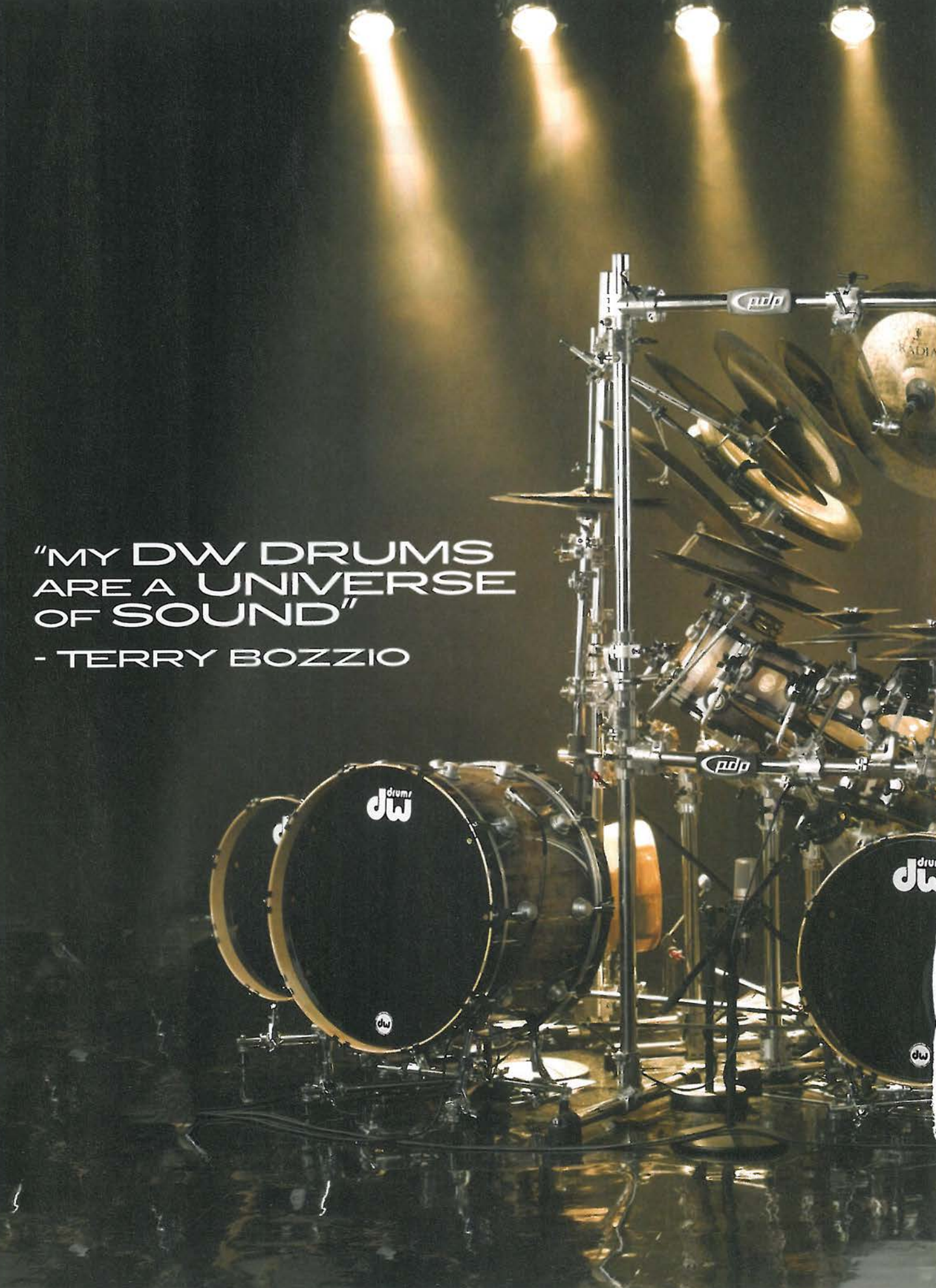
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Pearl

Daniel Adair

Revolving Door: Making The Exodus From 3 Doors Down To Nickelback

Not many drummers have enjoyed the career milestones that Daniel Adair has experienced. Adair has toured around the world four times, played aboard an aircraft carrier, and helped 3 Doors Down sell in excess of twelve million records.

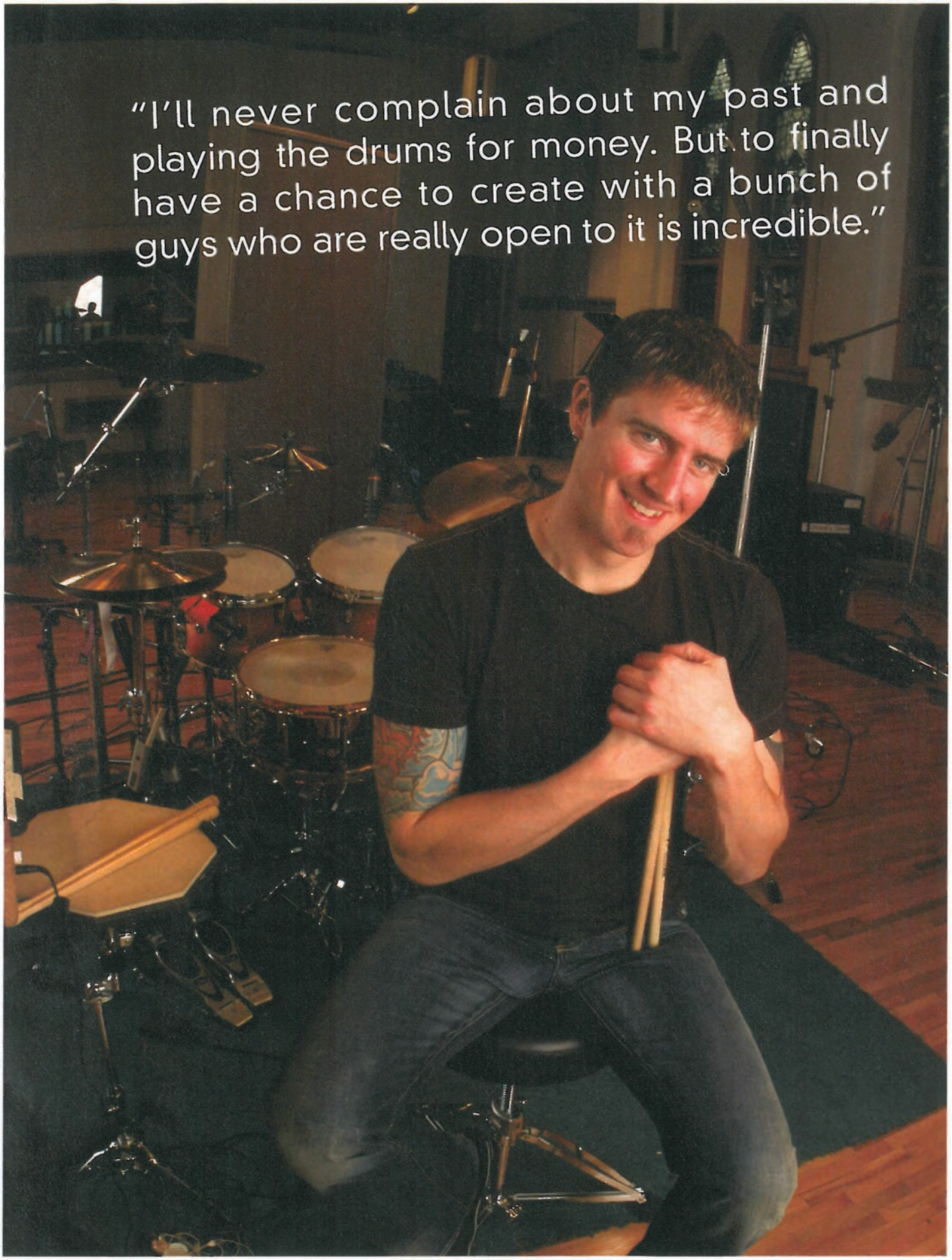
Adair's first gig with 3 Doors was on the USS George Washington off the coast of Lisbon, Portugal. It was an experience that would later become the video for the band's hit "When I'm Gone." Over the past three years, the Vancouver native has played on their live album, *Another 700 Miles*, and, more recently, tracked all the drums for their latest opus, *Seventeen Days*.

While in the midst of interviewing Daniel for *Modern Drummer*, and with the interview seventy-five percent complete, the word came down that he'd been asked to join Nickelback and share a piece of the collective pie as their full-time drummer. While Adair's roots were firmly planted in the 3 Doors Down camp, he was still considered a hired gun, not a full-time bandmember. After much deliberation, the drummer decided it would be a forward move to join his fellow Canadians in Nickelback.

In the following interview, Adair discusses his background and how he quickly rose up through the ranks to nab the 3 Doors Down gig. He also discusses the difficult decision of leaving one successful band for another.

Story by Steven Dcuglas Losey

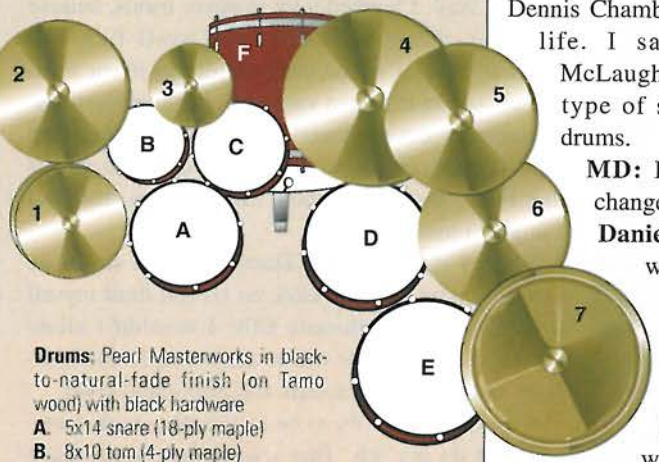
Photos by Rick Malkin


"I'll never complain about my past and playing the drums for money. But to finally have a chance to create with a bunch of guys who are really open to it is incredible."

MD: How did you get your start?

Daniel: My dad was a drummer in Michigan. He played cover tunes for guys who were leaving for Vietnam the next day. It was heavy stuff. He was covering Credence Clearwater Revival when it was new.

Daniel's Kit



Drums: Pearl Masterworks in black-to-natural-fade finish (on Tamo wood) with black hardware

A. 5x14 snare (18-ply maple)
B. 8x10 tom (4-ply maple)
C. 9x12 tom (4-ply maple)
D. 16x16 floor tom (4-ply maple/2-ply mahogany)
E. 16x18 floor tom (4-ply maple/2-ply mahogany)
F. 18x22 bass drum (6-ply maple/2-ply mahogany)

Cymbals: Sabian

1. 14" AAX Stage Hats
2. 17" AAXplosion crash
3. 10" Evolution splash
4. 21" HHX Groove ride
5. 18" AAXplosion crash
6. 18" AAX Stage crash
7. 20" Paragon Chinese

Hardware: All Pearl, including their Eliminator pedals
Heads: Remo C.S. on snare batter, clear Emperors on tom batters, clear Ambassadors on bottoms, PowerStroke 3 front and back of kick
Sticks: Regal Tip Daniel Adair signature model

My dad's kit was a '67 green sparkle Ludwig that was always sitting in our garage. One day, out of sheer boredom, I decided to set it up. I had seen what a drummer was doing on MTV and I wanted to see if I could cop those beats. Right around that same time, I listened to my sister's cassette of Rush's *Hemispheres*, and my eyes and ears popped out of my head. It was like, "Oh my gosh, that's possible?"

In the beginning, Neil Peart was it for me. After that I heard Dave Weckl and Dennis Chambers. Chambers changed my life. I saw him live with John McLaughlin, and I never knew that type of stuff was possible on the drums.

MD: How did that experience change your life?

Daniel: Dennis was set up sideways, so I could see everything he was doing. I'd seen him solo before in clinic and on instructional videos, but when I saw him in a musical context it was like the Ark of the Covenant was opened. Technically, I couldn't believe it.

But what really got me about Dennis was his musicality: how he played with the other cats, how he set up things, and how he understood the big picture of the music. That sent me into the woodshed in a serious way. So I ended up learning a lot of jazz and fusion stuff early on, and I played that style in a lot of the cover bands I was in.

MD: How did you get the gig with 3 Doors Down?

Daniel: I was living in Vancouver, playing in cover bands, managing a drum shop, and teaching fifteen students a week. A friend of mine runs the Armory Studios in Vancouver, and she called me and said 3 Doors Down was there recording tracks for their upcoming album. Oddly enough, I had just sung "Kryptonite" in a cover band the night before.

Unbeknownst to me, my friend had played Chris Henderson, their guitarist, a CD I had played on from one of my previous bands. It was a kick-ass fusion shredfest with this Berklee guy named Dave Martone. There was lots of double kick and odd-meter stuff on it. Chris is a fan of progressive music, so he was drawn to it, and called me up. "Are you the drummer on that CD? Come to the studio and play for us." When I got there, Chris brought me in to meet their producer, Rick Parashar. He started auditioning me. He said stuff like, "Play in seven," and "Now play in seven with a polyrhythmic feel, and come back on the 1 like you mean it."

After I played, they invited me for some beers and asked me if I wanted to come to Mississippi to audition for the whole band. I took the next couple of days off from work and learned every track off their previous albums, including all of their background vocals. Then I went down to the audition, and by the second song they said, "Welcome to the band. You wanna go jetskiing?"

MD: It sounds like at that point you might have been more comfortable playing jazz and fusion.

Daniel: I could play all styles, but I had to learn how to rock. I was doing Latin and jazz on gigs. When I joined 3 Doors Down they said, "You need to learn how to break cymbals." I felt like I didn't want to smash

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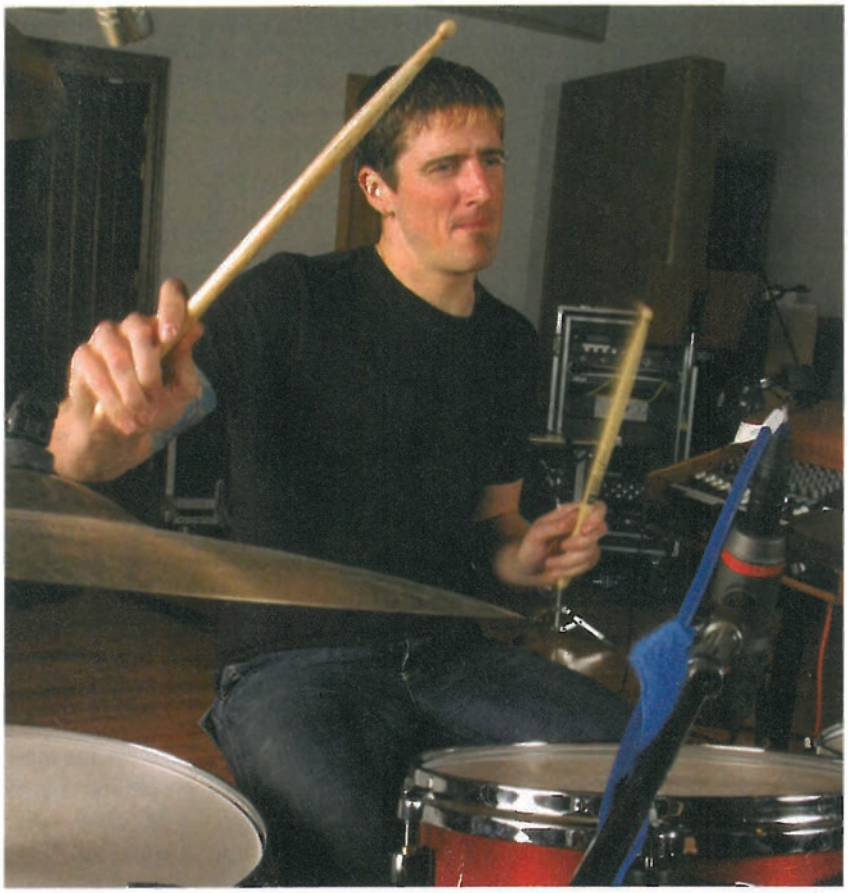

like a buffoon. So I started working with a great teacher named Gary Grace, who had studied with Jim Chapin. He helped me learn how to slam without hurting myself.

I also started to position my cymbals higher, and I learned to move my head, because I realized when you're playing in front of 16,000 people, the folks in the back can't see anything. You've got to move and swing your arms. I got into stick twirls, hitting cymbals with big arm movements, and all that stuff.

MD: Did a jazz and fusion background enhance or impede your rock groove?

Daniel: Well, I learned a lot in cover bands, believe it or not. When we were doing stuff like The Tragically Hip, I would throw in all this linear stuff, like six-stroke rolls and various hi-hat combinations. I remember once a bandleader turned around and said, "Daniel, if you want to work, don't do any of that stuff." It took me some time to learn that, and I'm glad I learned it then.

When I played with 3 Doors, I would sit for an hour at a time with the click on 60 and limit myself to only playing 8th-note fills. I wouldn't allow myself to do 16ths. It was to learn simple combinations and how to make them feel and sound good.

With the band, I try to be a slamming rock drummer and do my job. That's what they need, that's what they want, and I don't want to step over the

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music. They're great songs, and people are there to sing along, not to watch me do fast 16th-note triplets.

MD: But don't subtle nuances from those styles find their way into your playing?

Daniel: You nailed it there. If you practice all those inner-dynamics and all the technique on the drumset, you're right, it is going to come out. The pulse I have on the hi-hat probably isn't a straight, metronomic 8th-note thing. I've got the nuances in there, all of the ghost-note things, and maybe some interesting fills here and there that I bring out. I think that's where you'll find most of the cool nuances.

MD: What about your drum solo?

Daniel: *Now* we're talking. When I play my solo every night, I bring a lot of cool fusion-oriented stuff out.

MD: What about playing the parts of the other drummers who recorded with 3 Doors Down before you joined?

Daniel: [Singer] Brad Arnold played drums on the original album. When I first heard a lot of the songs, I played some of the parts my own way, but I found out quickly that the fans were coming to the show to hear what was on the record. So at that point I decided to play the parts as closely as possible to the originals, but make them more exciting.

MD: How did you accomplish that?

Daniel: Brad didn't hit as hard. He'd be coming to the big chorus and he'd hit the taper of the ride, but I would hammer on a crash and swing my arms for the theatrics of it all.

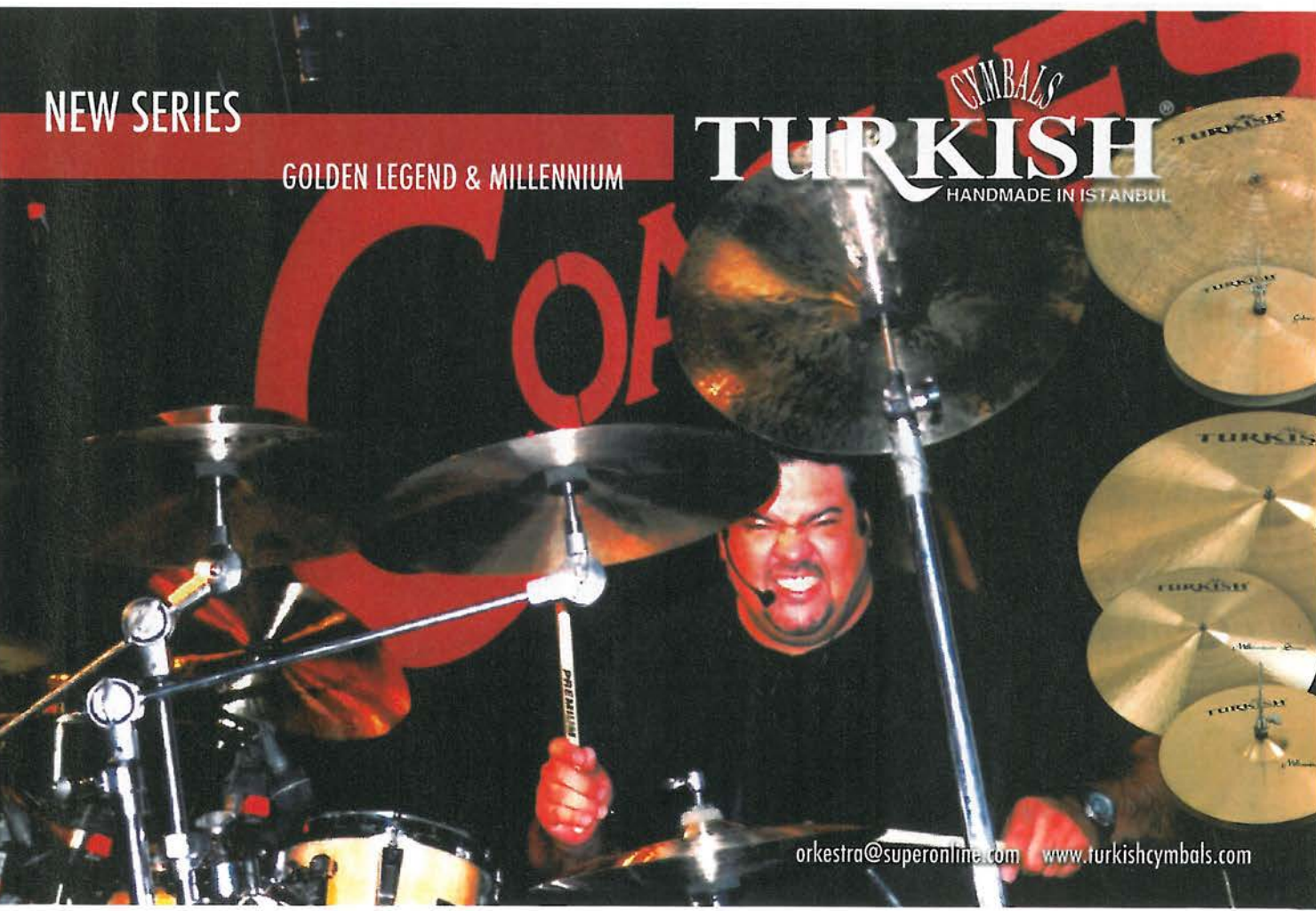
In the beginning, I was too busy. It was the first time I'd played for such big crowds. When you sit and practice all day, your first reaction is to want to show people your chops. And you know it's bad when the singer turns around and cocks his eyebrow at you like, "What was that?"

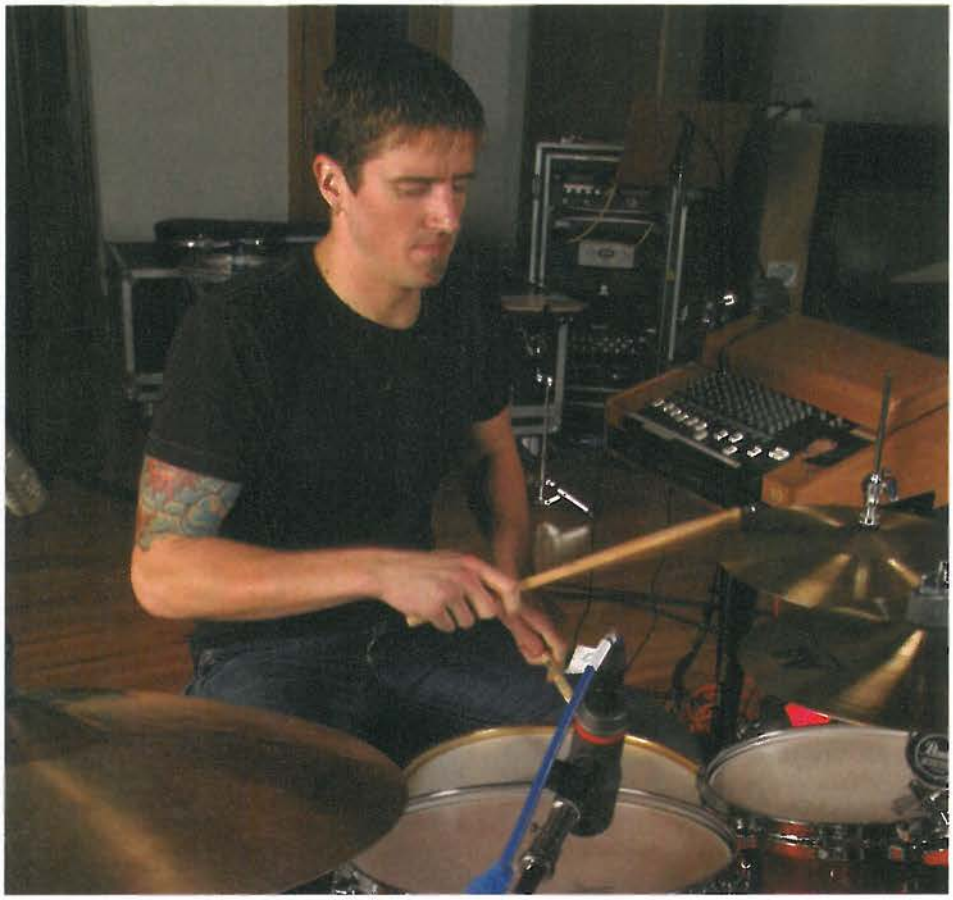
MD: And isn't there only one way to play a song like "Kryptonite"?

Daniel: Yeah, you don't change that song. It's pretty much built around the drums. Actually, it's the one song I played *exactly* like the record.

MD: Tell us about your gear.

Daniel: I've used Pearl drums and hardware for over ten years. I've had offers from other companies, but I think it shows integrity when you stick with a product that you believe in, and Pearl drums are awe-





some. I have a new Masterworks kit coming. I've been using a five-piece kit, but I might add another floor tom. I kept it pretty minimal on the last tour.

When you have fewer drums, people can see you. And when you have splashes and bells and all sorts of stuff, you can't see the crowd. I like interaction, making eye contact with the people in the front row. It's a real conduit for energy. It goes from them right to me. It creates this circle that I love.

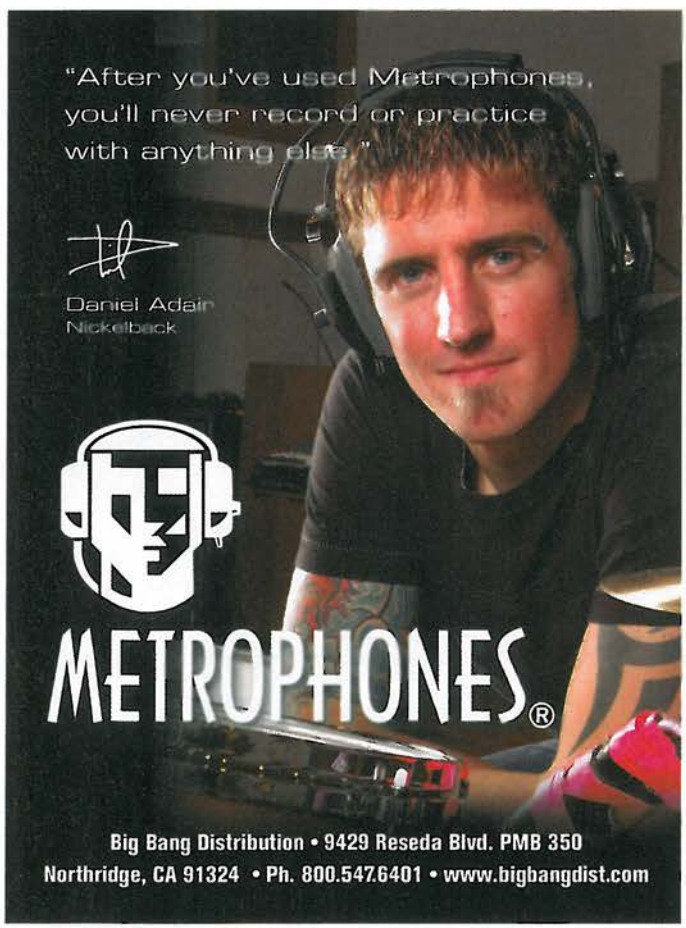
As for cymbals, I'm a Sabian guy. They're fellow Canadians. I also use Remo drumheads and Regal Tip 5A sticks with a wood tip.

MD: Isn't Regal Tip making you a signature model?

Daniel: Yes. I tried every stick under the sun when I worked in a music store, but I preferred Regal Tip because of their finish, which gets a little tacky when the sticks warm up. They feel the best to me. When I got the 3 Doors gig, I had a lot of offers, but Regal was who I wanted to go with. It was a real honor when they asked me to design a custom stick for them.

MD: What's different about your stick?

Daniel: It's a hybrid that's between a cou-



ple of models. The shape is basically a 5BX that's chopped down to the length of a 5A, and the tip is more of an acorn style.

MD: The overall feel of the new 3 Doors record is solid.

Daniel: I'm very proud of it. It might sound a bit basic, with standard rock fills, but I think they're placed in the right spots and with the right feel.

MD: The song "Right Where I Belong" has some cool snare work on it.

Daniel: On that particular tune I got to show some stuff without intruding on the song. The chorus has a real heavy guitar riff, so in pre-production, I did it with a double kick, a four-stroke roll. The producer was like, "That's too metal." The other guys said, "Are you crazy? That's *cool*." So we infiltrated a double kick lick into a radio rock album. The tune has some cool hi-hat stuff on the bridge as well.

MD: What were the high points of the recording process?

Daniel: I learned a lot from our producer, Johnny K. He taught me how to listen to a song through a producer's ears. I picked up on how to compose my kick drum patterns and my fills around the vocals, really listening to the whole song and trying to develop the drum parts more. He was very good at helping me to build and release tension in my parts and to develop riffs so the last one is bigger than the first.

I've always worked in the studio with an attitude of, "I like that fill, so I'll put it here." John would come back to me and say, "That doesn't fit at all. Why are you trying to put a round peg into a square hole?" It took me a while, because I didn't get what he meant. So I started coming to the studio early in the morning to practice what he was talking about, attempting to make these fills flow. I would try to hit a cymbal instead of a floor tom when Brad was hitting a high note, so that the frequencies would complement each other. Usually drummers don't think about that—I certainly hadn't. I came away from that experience learning so many things like that.

MD: So, now for the big question: How did the opportunity arise for you to join Nickelback?

Daniel: Well, right before I met the 3 Doors guys, I had helped [Nickleback leader] Chad Kroeger in the studio for pre-production on "Saturday Night's Alright For Fighting." I kind of knew the guys in Nickelback because we're all from Vancouver. In fact, I had played in a band that opened a few of their shows in 1999, when they were first starting. Later we all went on tour together with 3 Doors and bonded again.

Recently I got a call from their tour manager, who said Nickelback was holding auditions. He wanted to know if I was interested, because they knew I was basically a hired gun with 3 Doors. It all came down to the fact that I *was* a hired gun and I wanted to be a member of a band.

Then I went in and recorded a song with Chad in his studio, and after that they said, "Do you want the gig?" I basically spent two weeks not sleeping, because it was the biggest decision of my life. I actually let the 3 Doors guys know on the day we met President Bush at his inauguration. I love those guys, but this was a career move I needed to make. The other cool thing about joining Nickelback is that I get to stay home in Canada and not fly back and forth.

MD: So the audition was basically you and Chad in the studio?

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Daniel Adair

Daniel: Yeah, they knew my drumming well—how I perform, and the fact that I can sing. They thought I was a good choice for the band. I know they brought in a couple of other guys, but they laid it out for me and I took it.

MD: What are the main differences between the drum grooves of each band?

Daniel: Well, Nickelback definitely rocks harder. Ryan Vikedal, their previous drummer, is a friend of mine, and he wrote some great drum parts. He's a studied player with great technique, and he pulled off some very interesting drum parts.

I'd have to say that Nickelback is higher-energy, with a little more going on and more room to play. I'm also hoping that I can sing more with the group and get involved in some three-part harmonies. The new stuff has a lot of room for that.

MD: How do you see yourself fitting in?

Daniel: I see it great! They're so open to listening to suggestions. During my audition, they had this melody part on the guitar that I thought could be better. Chad could see a look on my face, so he threw a guitar at me. I played this little melody and he said, "That's perfect," and then they recorded it. They said, "Now you have a piece of this song." I went home and couldn't sleep that night. I was just so inspired. I felt like the creative guy in me was back and was finally able to come out.

I'll never complain about my past and playing the drums for money. But to finally have a chance to create with a bunch of guys who are open to it is incredible. Especially with a guy like Chad, who is a master songwriter, to even consider my ideas, is a real honor.

MD: Can you pinpoint a reason for your success?

Daniel: Obviously, it's very important to get your playing together. But I also recommend to every drummer trying to get gigs that they learn how to sing. I've been trying to help 3 Doors with auditioning drummers, and I know guys who are great players and who have a great look, but they don't sing. It's like you just lost the gig and you don't even know it.

MD: So what does the future hold?

Daniel: Well, I'll be recording the new Nickelback album, which will probably be released by the end of this year. I see myself being a bandmember, writing, creating, and having a say in things. I can't wait!

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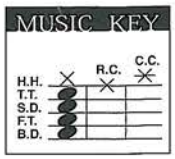
Gadson's Groove

The Lesson Is In The Beats, Part 2

by David Garibaldi



When I began playing the drums, I had no idea that I would someday be writing educational pieces for magazines. I did know that I wanted to be a teacher, though, and I feel this has become a significant part of my contribution to the art of drumming. I've always loved words, and having an interest in journalistic skills has been very helpful in my attempts to communicate my thoughts and concepts.

When I started writing regularly for *MD* over twenty years ago, my focus was on presenting ideas based on my interests and "discoveries." Today, as I return to the pages of this distinguished magazine, the focus is still the same, but also with a desire to pay tribute to the remarkable men who came before me.

Learning takes on added depth when we follow the well-worn path of history and tradition. Studying those who came before us is essential in building the vision we have of ourselves. You'll probably know many of the drummers I'll be discussing. Some you may only have heard about. And a few you may not have heard of at all. But all of these uniquely gifted men are inventors. They're the reason we play the way we do today.

James Gadson

One of my favorite drummers is the great James Gadson. How many of you have heard of this man? This article will be a refresher for the three of you who raised your hand, for the rest of you it's an introduction. Either way, I'll wager that most of you have heard him even if you didn't realize it at the time.

Funk-drumming pioneer James Gadson is one of the most recorded drummers in the modern era—a "hit maker." From the late '70s throughout the '80s he was *the man* in the LA session scene, playing on many gold and platinum recordings. He is a gifted, self-taught player who can read, groove with or without a click, play very simply if necessary, or craft a song-specific beat using his unique vocabulary.

My favorite recording of Gadson's is with a group called Dyke & The Blazers. Dyke (Arlester Christian) was a bassist and a vocalist. His first hit song, done in 1967, was "Funky Broadway, Pt. 1 & 2," featuring drummer Rodney Brown. "Funky Broadway" is also the title of the album that contained the classics "We Got More Soul" and "Let A Woman Be A Woman, Let A Man Be A Man." With the exception of the title track, James Gadson was the drummer, and he played different beats on each song. All the performances have a raw sound, but conceptually they're *very* sophisticated.

The rhythm section was from The Watts 103rd Street Rhythm Band, which featured Al McKay on guitar and Melvin Dunlap on bass. McKay went on to play with Earth, Wind & Fire, and was a writer of many of their hit songs.

Fortunately, *Funky Broadway* has been reissued on CD, now with the title *So Sharp!* It's a compilation of some of Dyke's recordings and also was the title of one of his later releases.

Gadson, in an interview in Jim Payne's great book, *Give The Drummer Some*, had this to say about where his drumming came from: "When I was in the Air Force, I was stationed in Louisiana. I heard all those different funk beats down there. That probably had a lot to do with the way I sounded." Further proof that the lessons are in the beats!

The transcription that follows is James' performance on a Dyke & The Blazers song called "My Sisters And My Brothers." This cutting-edge performance, full of energy and dynamics, is from *So Sharp!*, and more than likely was recorded without a click. The year was 1968, which makes this track even *more* awesome. Very few drummers were playing this way at that time.

Some other great examples of Gadson's groove can be heard on the *Saturday Night Fever* soundtrack, "Express Yourself" and "Loveland" by Charles Wright & The Watts 103rd Street Rhythm Band (James sang the lead vocal *and* played drums on the latter), and Bill Withers' "Use Me."

Today, James is still busy recording, writing, and touring. Some of his recent work includes Paul McCartney, Solomon Burke, and Rickie Lee Jones. Anyone interested in learning how to play funk drums *must* study this man's work.

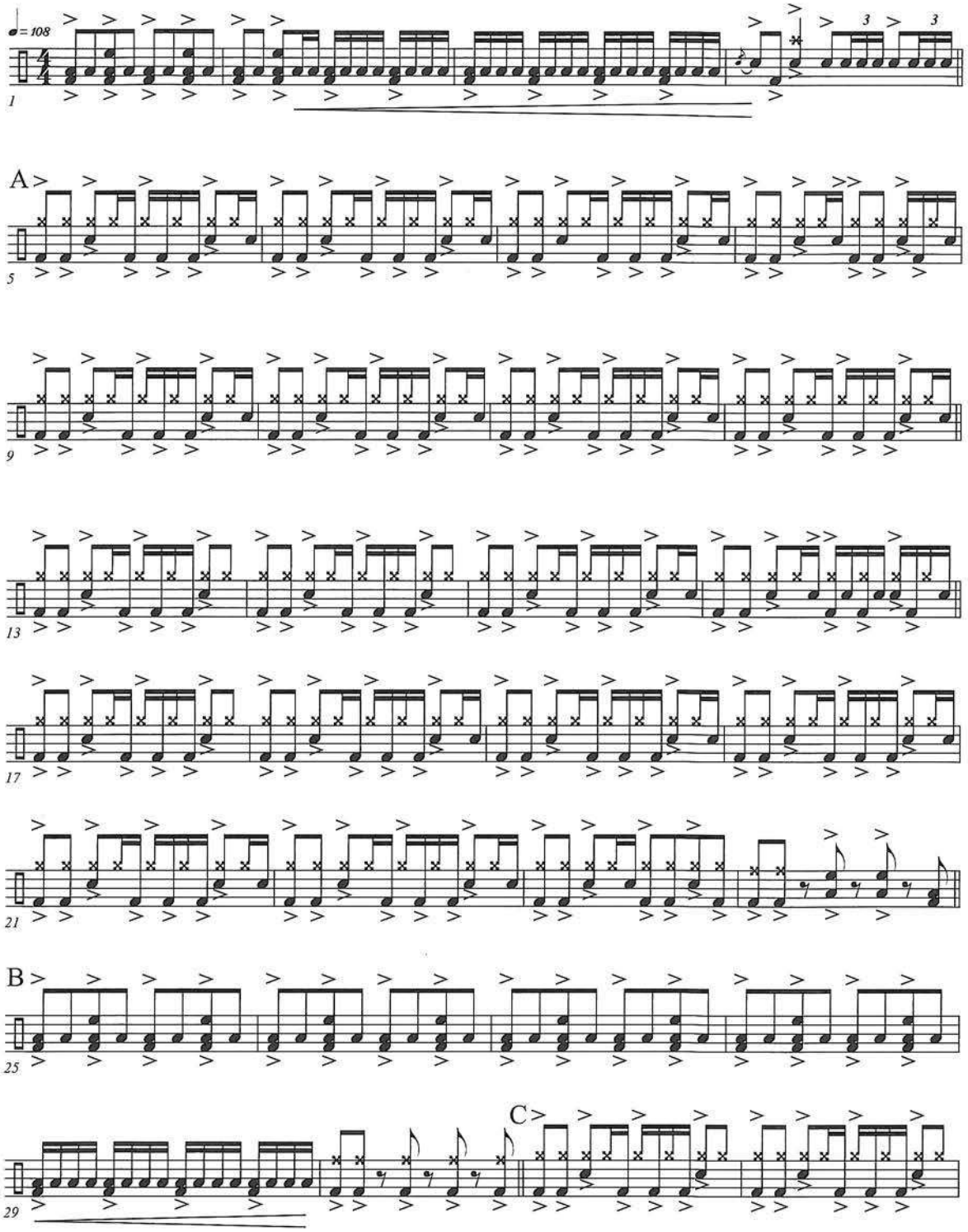
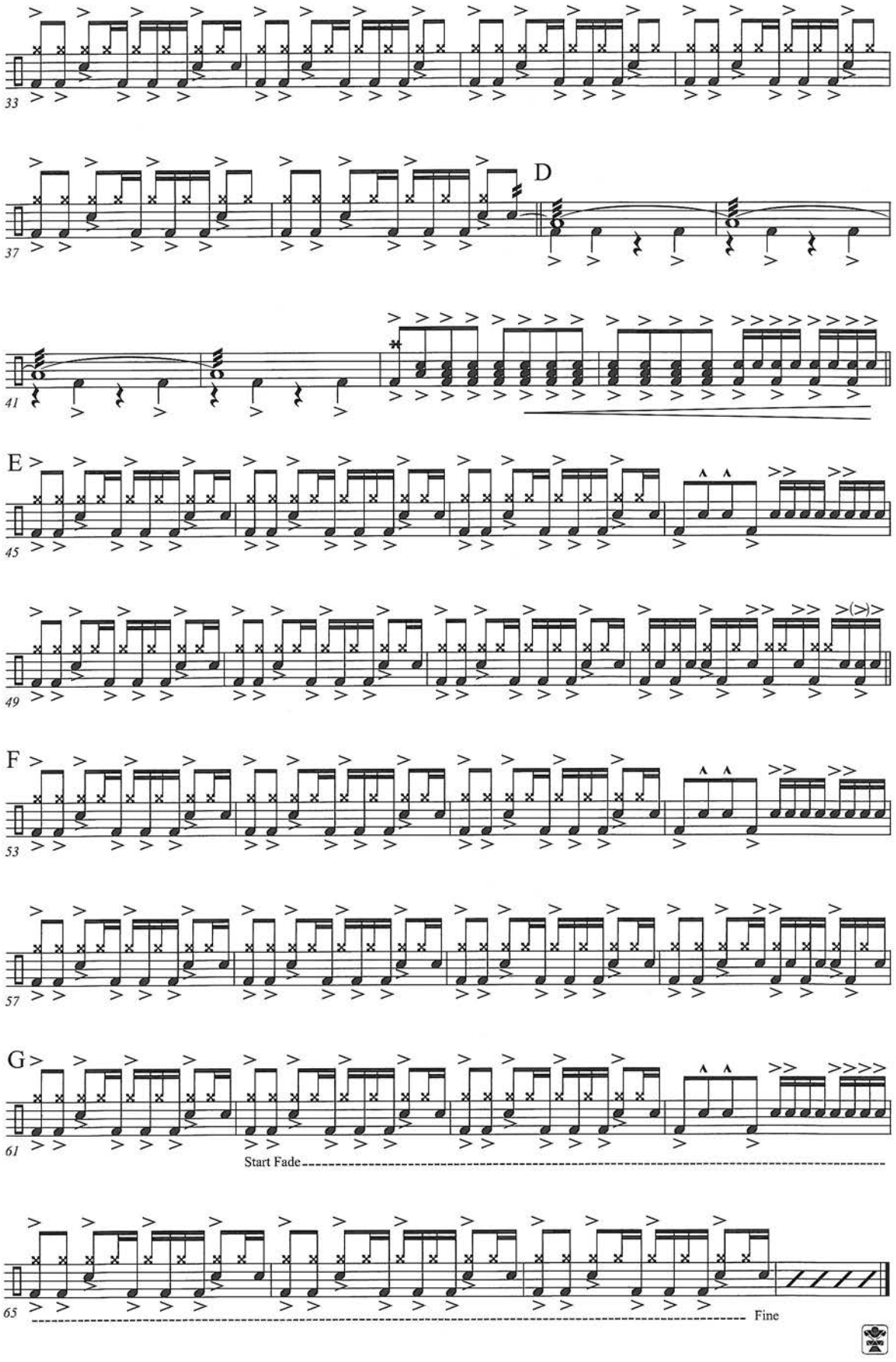
Performance Notes

Read through the following transcription while listening along with the track. Notice that the ghosted notes are some times at different volume levels. (For instance, see measure 52.) There are different volume levels for accents as well. To clarify, all unaccented snare drum notes are ghosted, a note with an accent in parentheses is played with a medium accent, and a note with a typical accent marking is played strongly.

In measures 24 and 30, the figures have what sound like strokes on the ride cymbal instead of crashes. (It's difficult to distinguish on the recording, so you decide.)

Enjoy. See you down the road!

"My Sisters And My Brothers"

Dyke & The Blazers, James Gadson (drums)

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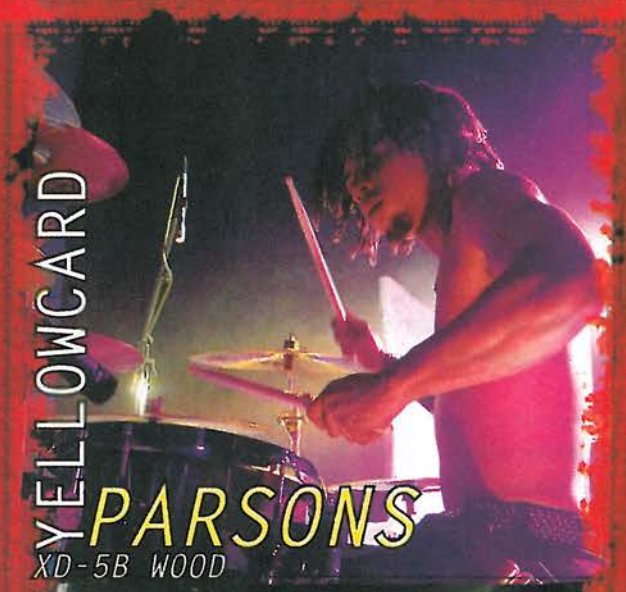

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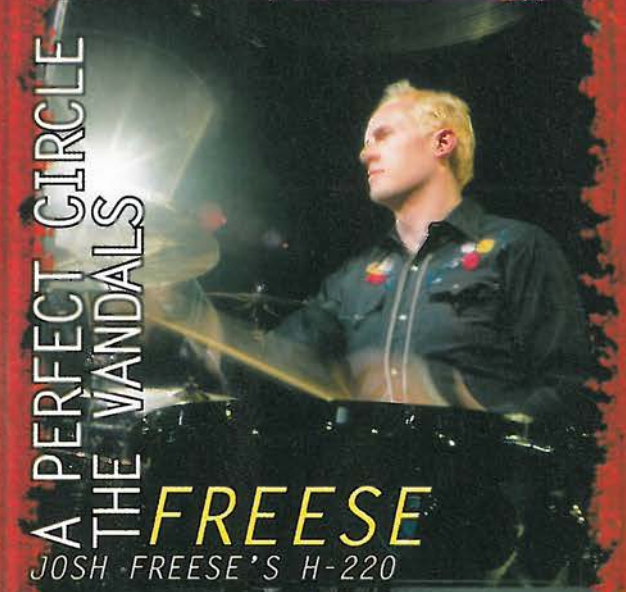

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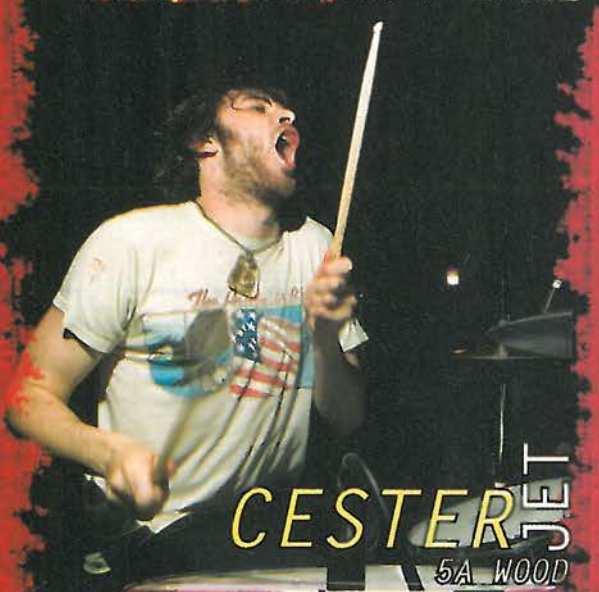

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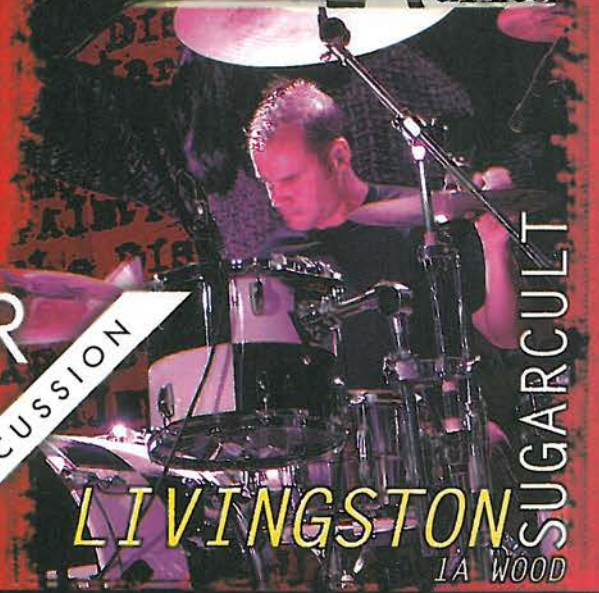

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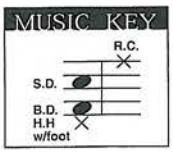
Creative Coordination

Part 2: Offbeat Ostinatos

by Ari Hoenig

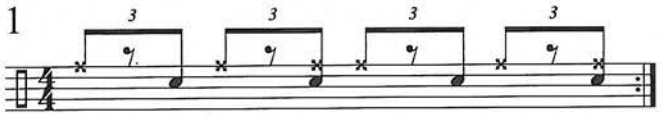


Welcome. Last month we worked with offbeat ostinatos and explored some possibilities of improvising around them. In Part 1, we used 8th-note phrases, but this time we'll dive in a little deeper and see how the ostinatos relate to melodies based on quarter-note triplets.

We'll begin by playing quarter-note triplets (on and off the beat) in one limb against a snare drum ostinato. This will give you an idea of how everything lines up. Start slowly, at around quarter note = 70 bpm.

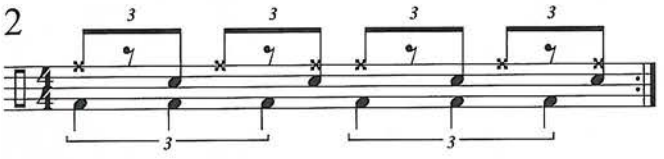
Snare Drum Ostinato:

1



Quarter-Note Triplets With Ostinato:

2



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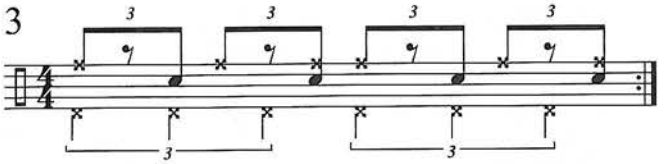

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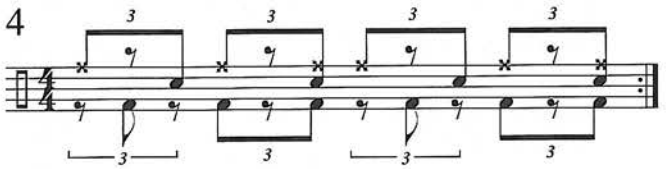

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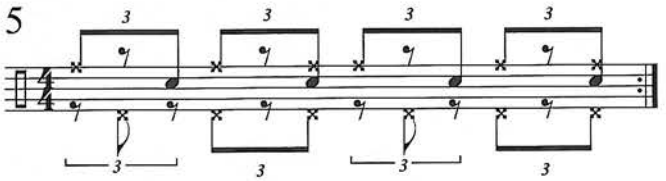
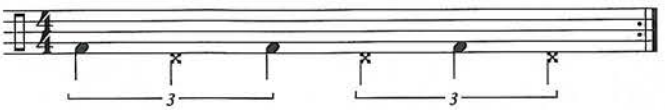


Examples 2–5 are written out with the ostinato on the snare. You should also practice them played on the hi-hat and bass drum. For example, if you change to the bass drum ostinato, you'll be playing all the offbeats on the bass drum. This leaves the hi-hat and snare to play the quarter-note triplet ideas.

Now let's move on to two-limb melodies that will be played along with the ostinatos. For these, play four bars of the ostinato alone and then four bars of the example along with the ostinato. (For clarity, these examples are written *without* the ostinato.)

Play the snare drum ostinato (Example 1) over the top of Examples 6–9.

6



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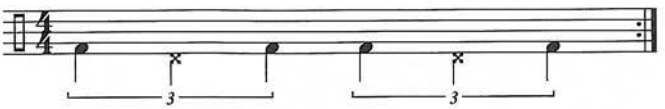

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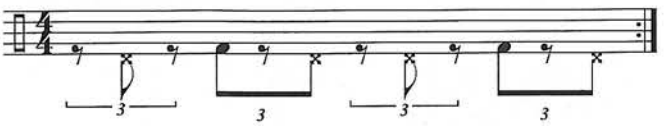

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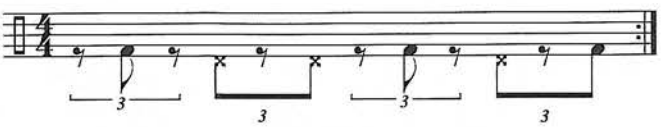
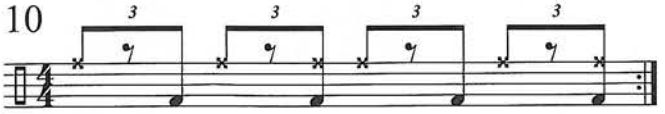


Play the bass drum ostinato (Example 10) along with Examples 11–14.

10



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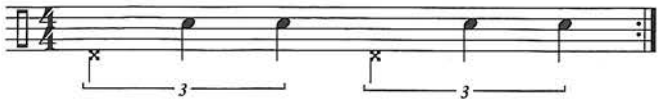

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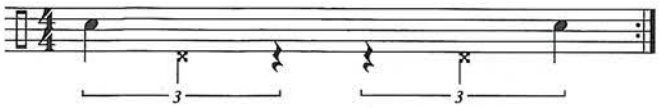
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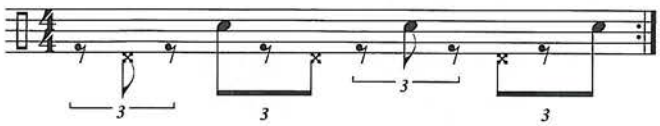

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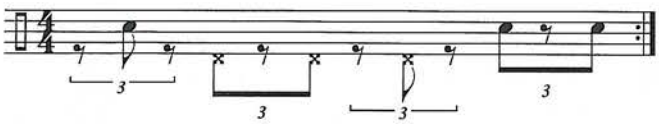
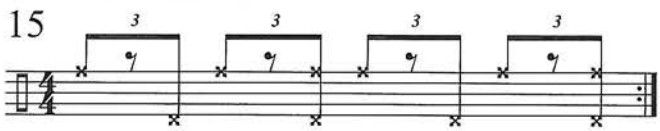


Play the hi-hat ostinato (Example 15) along with Examples 16–19.

15



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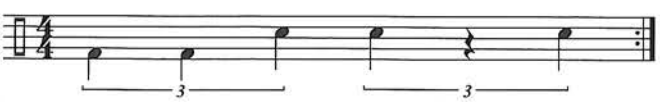
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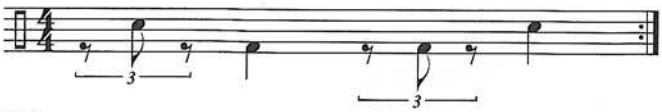

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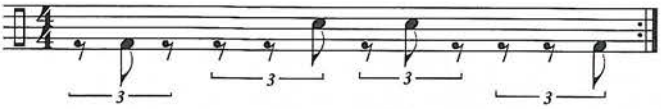
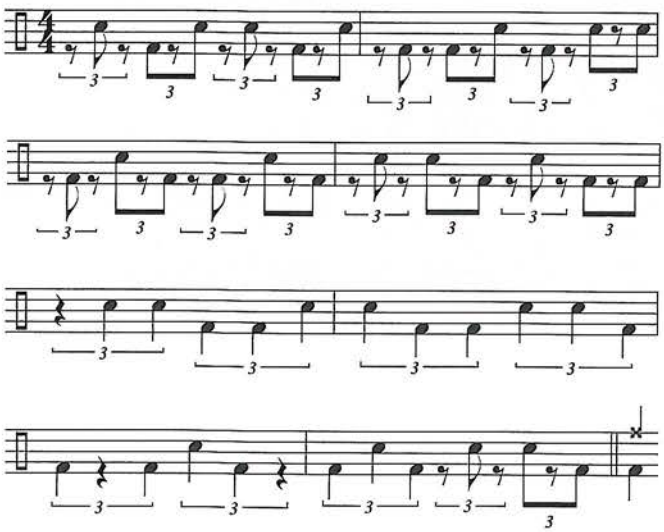
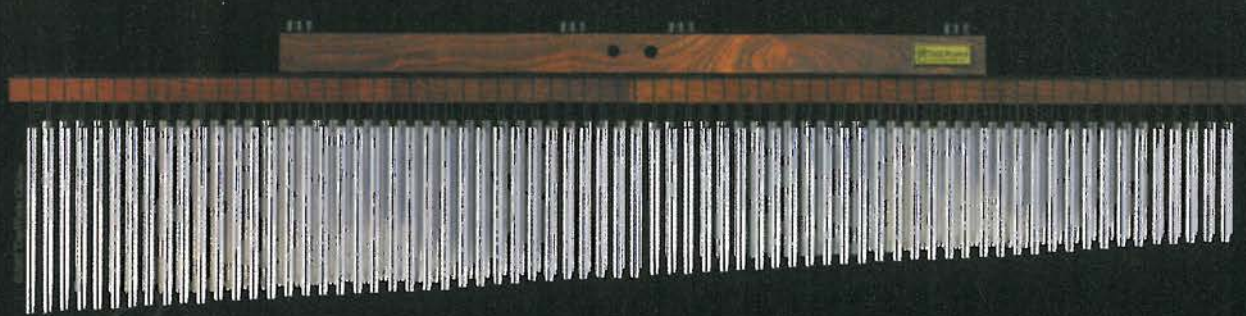

Now try making up your own two- and four-bar phrases. Here's an eight-bar phrase with some over-the-barline figures.

20

Note that these examples are interchangeable with any ostinato. For instance, you can use the bass drum ostinato for Example 20 by changing all the bass drum notes to the hi-hat. (The snare stays the same.)

Ari Hoenig is a top New York jazz drummer. He currently works with Joshua Redman, Kenny Werner, Wayne Krantz, Jean-Michel Pilc, Seamus Blake, and Dave Kikoski.



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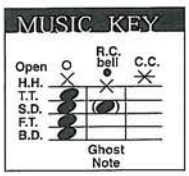
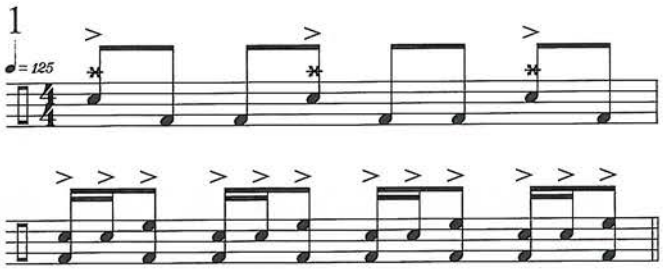
by Ed Breckenfeld



It's roots time for U2, as the world's preeminent rock band rediscovers the power of message and melody backed by the simplicity of guitar and drums. Gone are the loops and dance-club grooves that the band experimented with over the last decade. The return to a stripped-down approach relies on the power of Larry Mullen Jr.'s straightforward drum patterns. Let's check out some of his work on the disc.

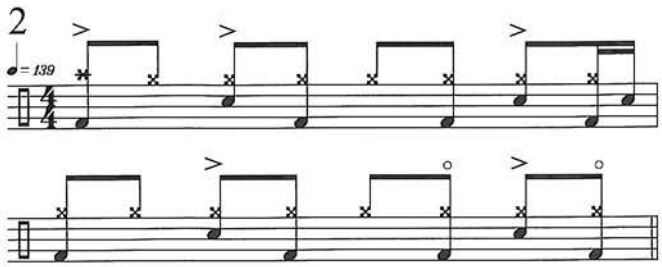
"Miracle Drug"

Mullen emphasizes Bono's lyrical hook with a drum fill that reoccurs throughout the song. (3:27)



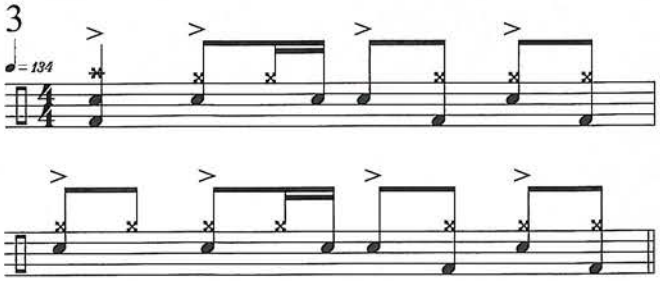
"City Of Blinding Lights"

The movement in this beat (Example 2) mixes well with Adam Clayton's pulsing 8th-note bass guitar part. Switching between a 16th-note snare and a couple of open hi-hats at the end of each measure keeps the groove interesting. (2:20)

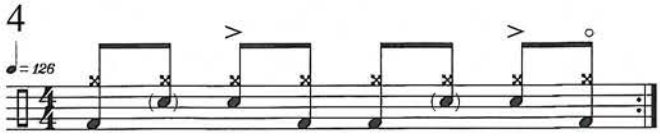


"All Because Of You"

Through the addition of a 16th note, Mullen puts a unique spin on the classic quarter-note snare beat that drives this track. (0:16)

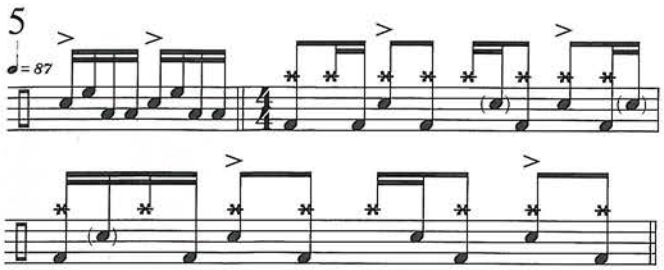


"A Man And A Woman"

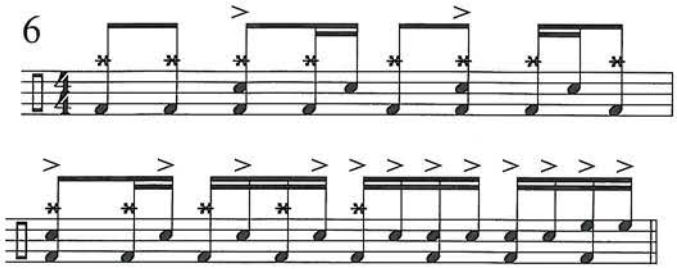
Ghost notes add a revolving feel to this simple groove. (3:01)

To hear these tracks from Larry Mullen Jr. and U2, tune in to MD Radio at www.moderndrummer.com

"Crumbs From Your Table"

Mullen's dynamic feel is impeccable in this syncopated pattern from the intro of the tune. (0:22)

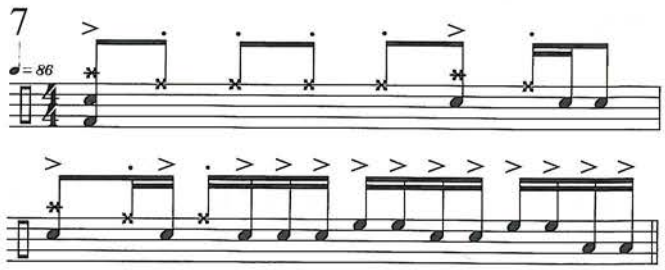


As the song moves to its climax, Larry bashes 8th notes on a crash cymbal and kick drum to match The Edge's lead solo, while his snare keeps the syncopation going. (4:29)



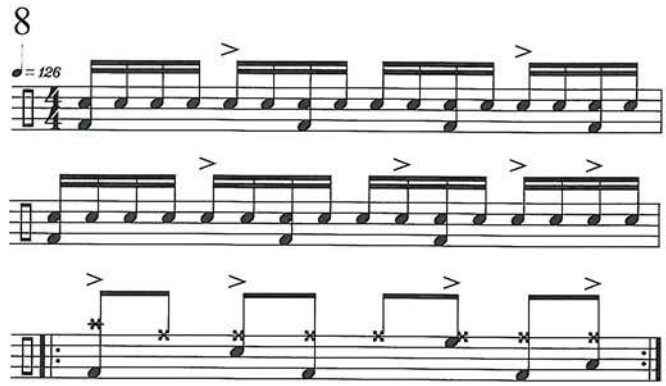
"Original Of The Species"

The breakdown section of this track features some nice drum fills flowing out of the cymbal bell pattern. (3:02)



"Yahweh"

The use of bundle sticks adds a subtle and gentle touch to this song, which ends the album like a prayer. Here Larry switches from the 16th-note snare ride of the verse to a cool ride cymbal/tom combination in the chorus. (1:56)



You can contact Ed Breckenfeld through his Web site at www.edbreckenfeld.com.

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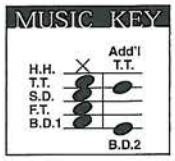
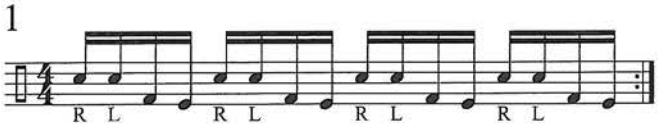
Double Bass Drumming
Part 7: Fills

by Rod Morgenstein

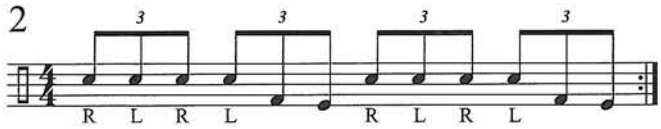


This month we're going to continue our series on double bass drumming and focus on one of my favorite aspects: fills! Believe it or not, an astounding number of double bass fills consist of the following two (yes, two!) hand/foot patterns, found in Examples 1 and 2.

Example 1 is a four-note lick consisting of two consecutive single strokes played with the hands (RL), followed by two consecutive single strokes played with the feet (RL). Practice playing this pattern over and over, making sure each 16th note, especially the left foot, is given equal emphasis.

1

Example 2 is a six-note pattern consisting of four consecutive single strokes played with the hands (RLRL) followed by two consecutive single strokes played with the feet (RL). Practice this pattern over and over until you "own" it.

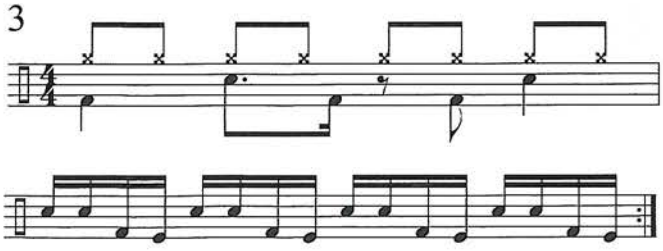
2



Now you need to practice the previous two fills in a musical context by playing a two-measure phrase consisting of a one-measure beat followed by a one-measure double bass fill. Example 3 is a 16th note–based beat followed by the fill from Example 1. Example 4 is a triplet-based beat followed by the fill from Example 2.

The beats in these two examples are arbitrary. Practice playing a variety of 16th-note or triplet/shuffle-based beats of your choice followed by these fills. The important thing is to transition smoothly from the beat to the fill and vice versa. Pay special attention to the fact that there will be three bass drum strokes (RLR) as the fill transitions back into the beat. It's extremely important for the bass drum stroke on the downbeat of the groove to be powerful and right on the money.

3



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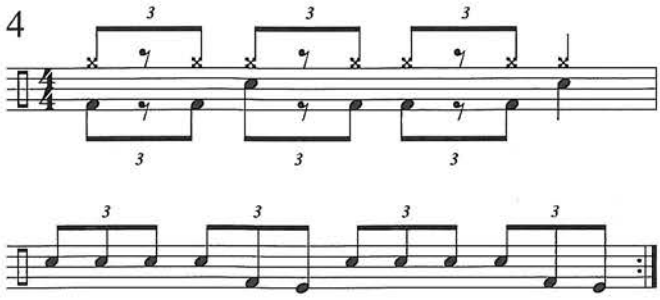
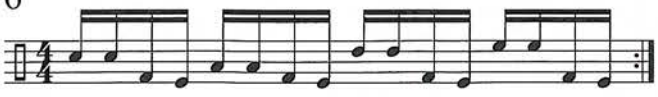


Orchestrating rhythms around the kit is what brings them to life. It's also what gives us the opportunity to put our own individual and creative stamp on them. Examples 5–10 consist of various drumset orchestrations of Example 1. They involve moving around the set clockwise, counterclockwise, crisscross, and playing one drum surface at a time. After getting comfortable playing each fill, practice them in a musical context by playing two- or four-measure phrases. Either play a one-measure beat followed by a one-measure fill, or play a two-measure beat followed by a two-measure fill.

5

6

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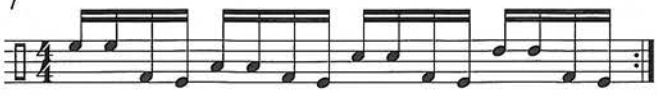
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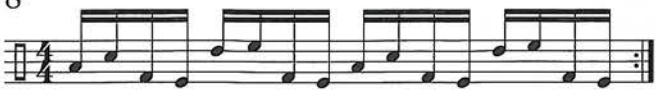
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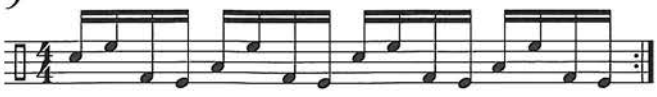
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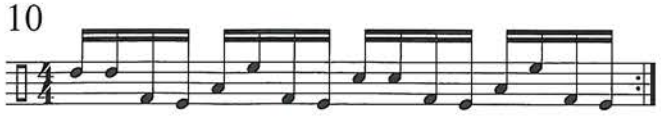
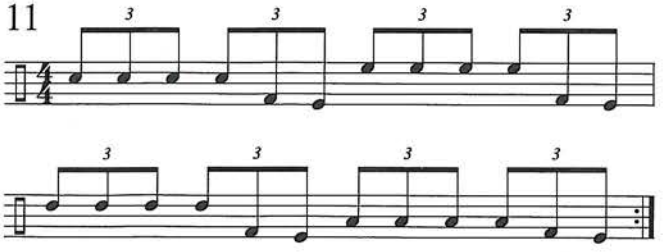

Now follow a similar process with Examples 11–18, which are drumset orchestrations of Example 2.

11



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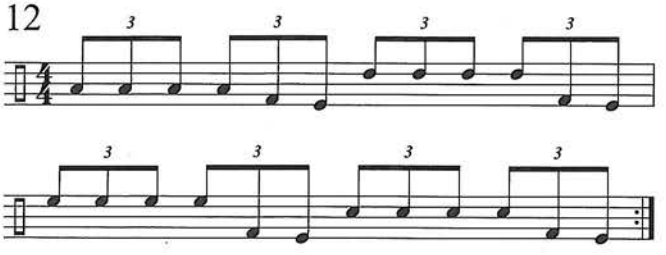

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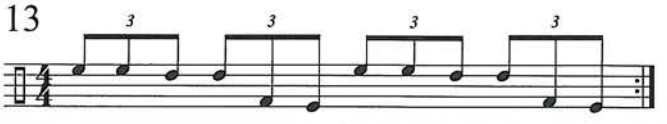
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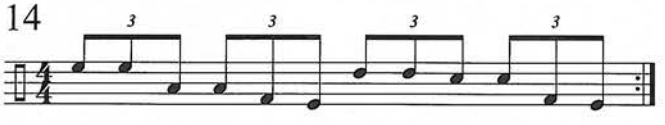
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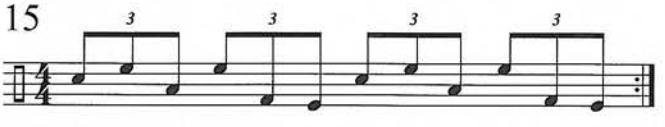
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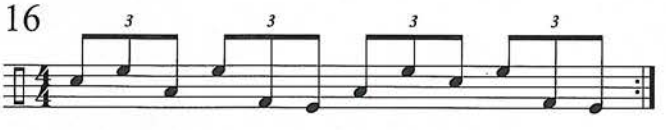
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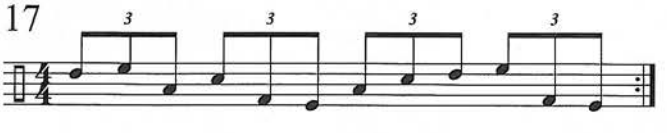
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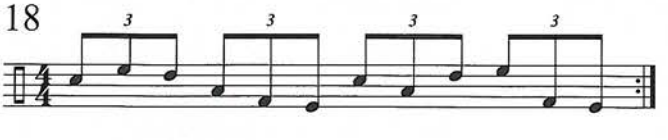
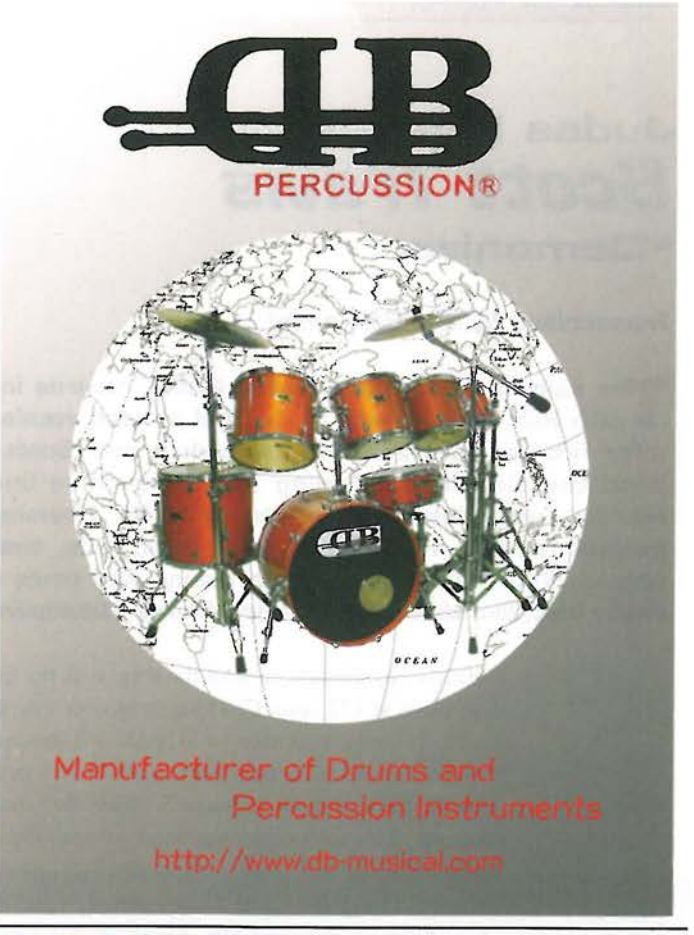
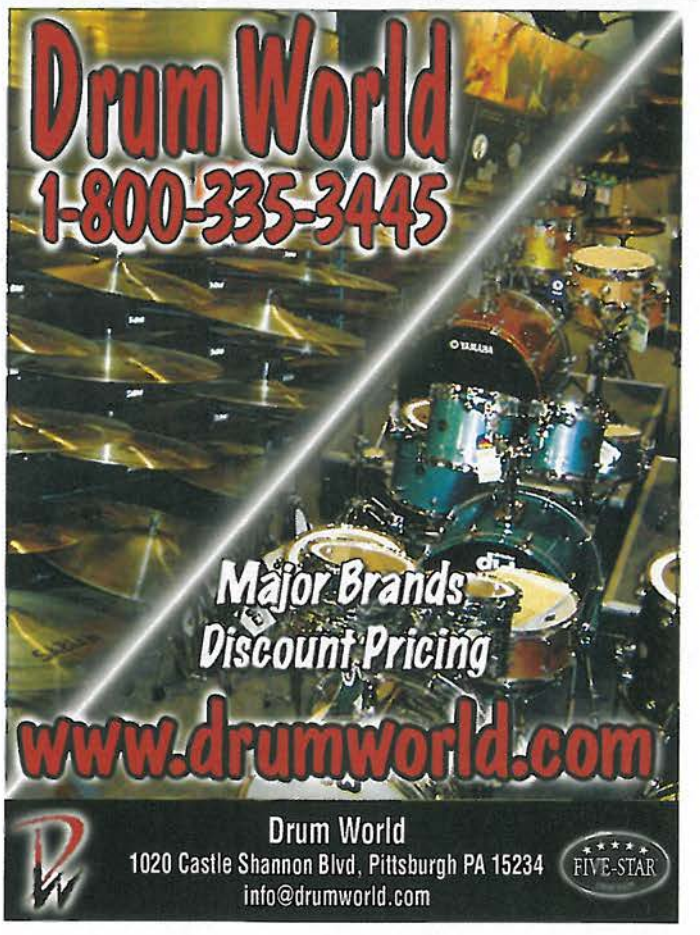


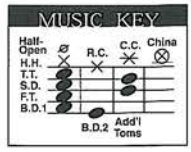
Next time we'll move on to fills involving four consecutive strokes with the feet. Drum on!





Judas Priest's
Scott Travis
"Demonizer"

Transcribed by Joe Bergamini



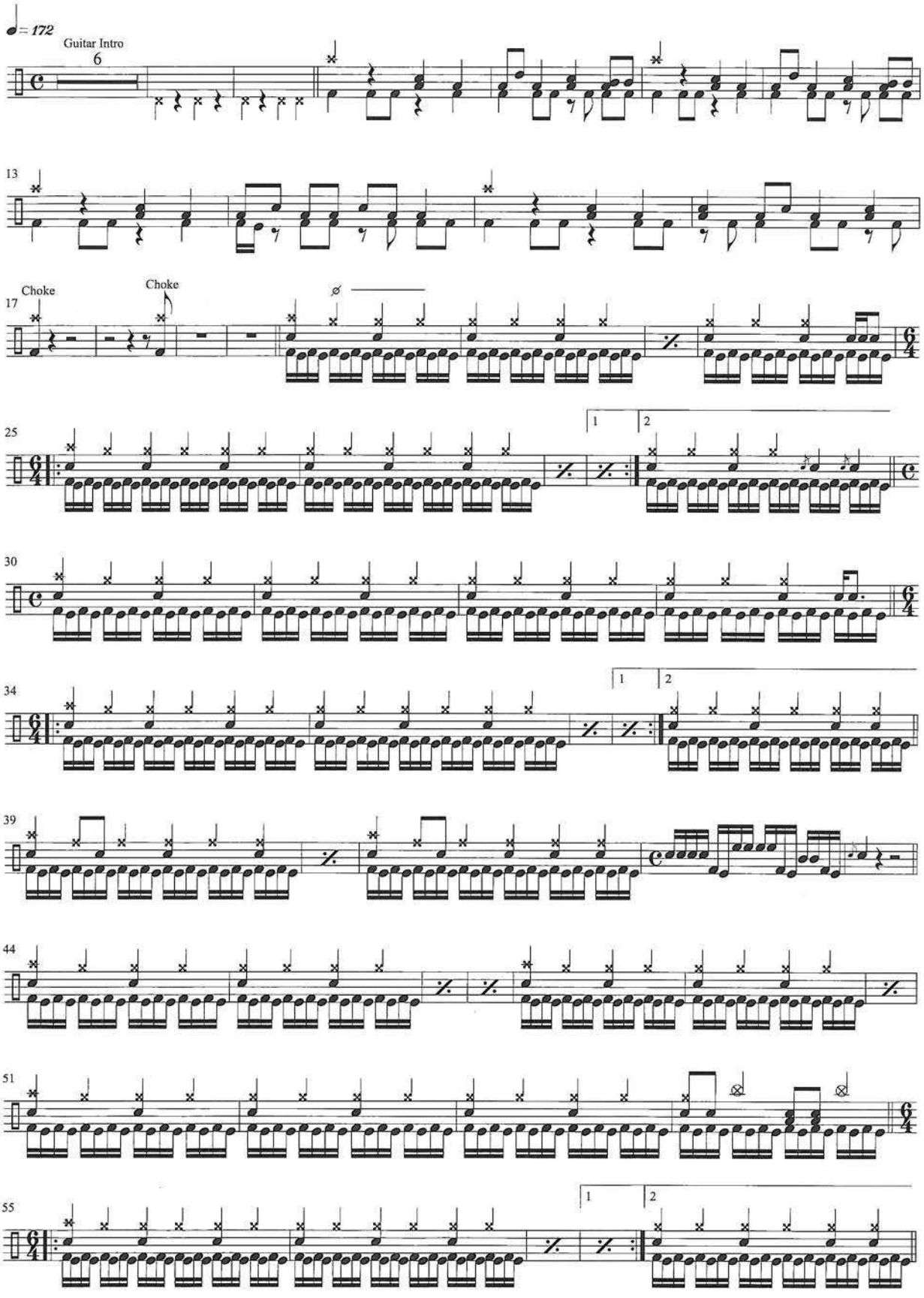
The seminal metal band Judas Priest returns in 2005 with Rob Halford back in the fold on lead vocals. Now, after fifteen years with the band, drummer Scott Travis joins the classic *Screaming For Vengeance* lineup of Halford, guitarists Glenn Tipton and KK Downing, and bassist Ian Hill. Hang on to your hats, kids, their new record, *Angel Of Retribution*, is heavy. And some of it is really fast, like this month's *Rock Chart*, "Demonizer."

Travis rips through most of the song with his feet blazing 16th notes at 172 bpm. Clocking in at over four minutes in length, this track is an exercise in speed and stamina that very few players can withstand. But anyone who's familiar with Travis's previous work in Racer-X knows that speed is only one part of his formidable drumming arsenal. Check out the heavy tribal groove that starts the song and returns later in an embellished form.

Then it's off to the races with an onslaught of driving double bass. The main verses are in 6/4, which adds a further challenge while playing at such a high speed. Listen to the vocals to follow the meter change. Also, notice how Travis moves the snare drum from 1 and 3 to 2 and 4 throughout the song, creating the illusion of further meter changes, which keeps the tension high.

During the guitar solo, Travis breaks into a tasteful single bass groove before returning to the double kicks. Listen for several cool fills and some Bozzio-esque snare and cymbal combinations during the outro.

"Demonizer" is a great example of heavy and fast drumming blended with musicality, creativity, and clever arranging.

Marco Sacco

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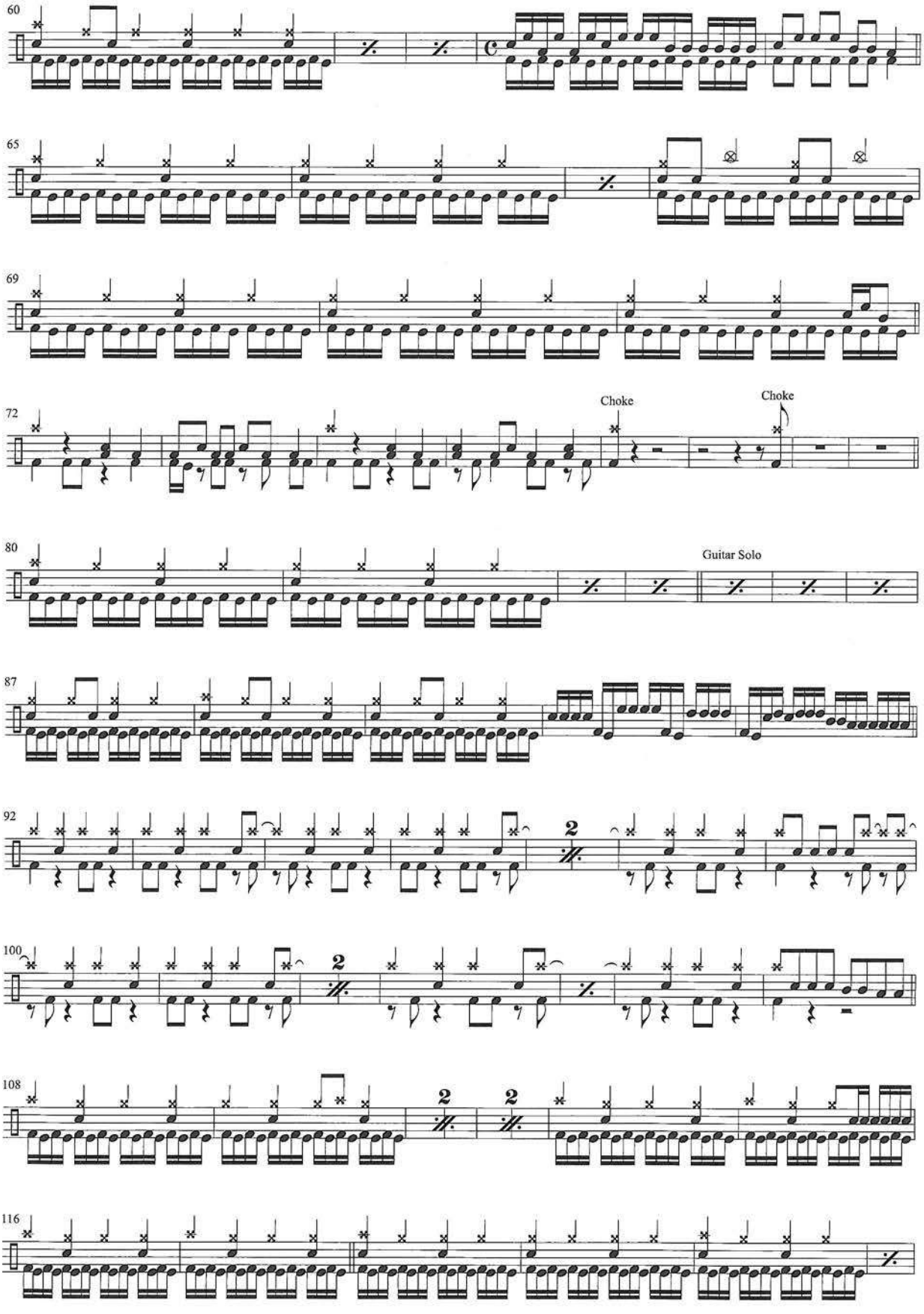
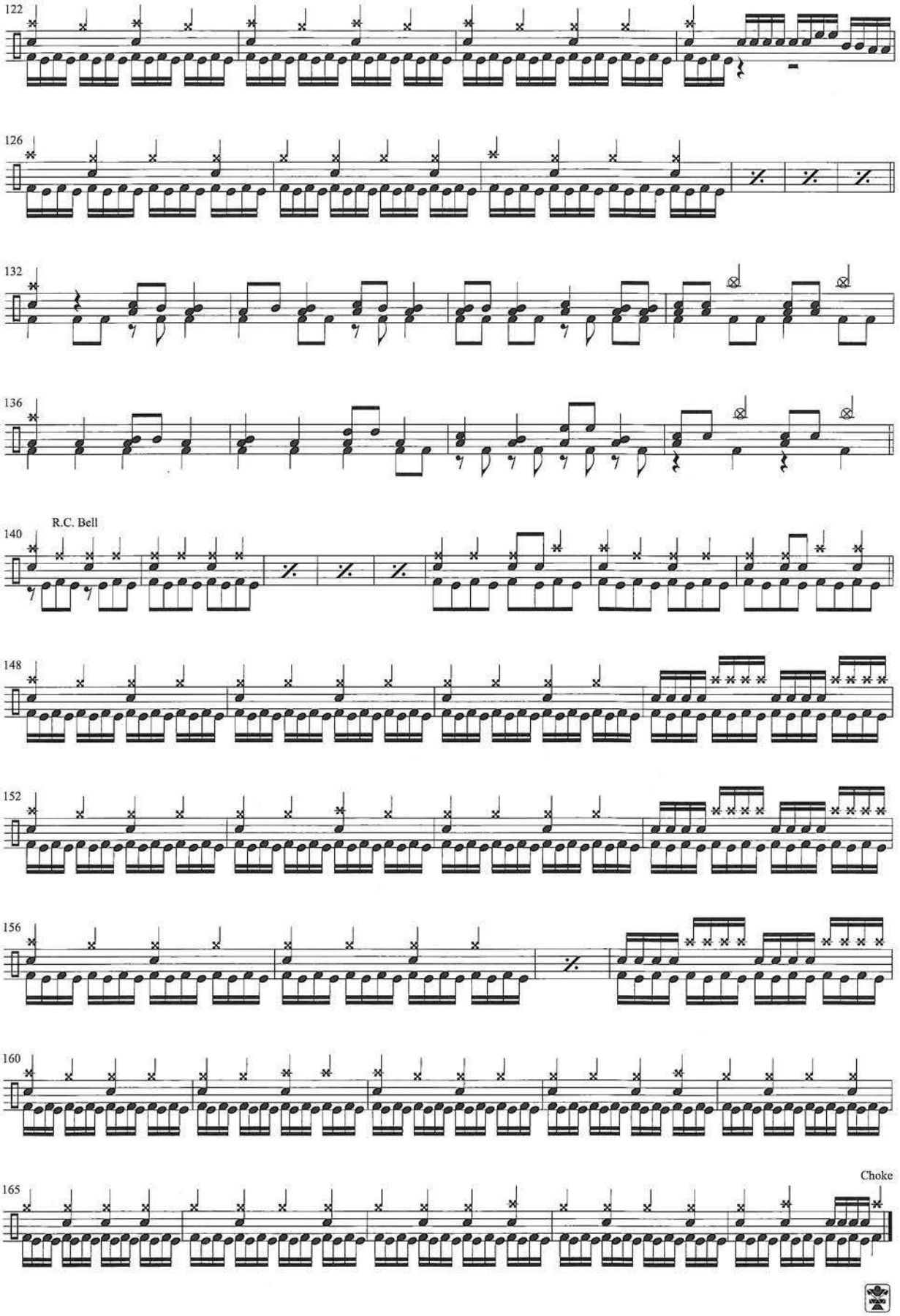
Scott Travis

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R.C. Bell
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Choke
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The Practice Of Listening

Hearing Beyond The Drums

by Michael Dawson

Listening is often an aspiring drummer's most underdeveloped skill. A typical drum student spends countless hours practicing technique and coordination, but devotes very little time honing his or her ability to listen. The fact is that well-developed listening skills can transform a "good drummer" into a "complete musician."

A drummer with advanced listening skills never relies on musical habits, never plays out of context, and always contributes to the dynamic flow of the music. Fortunately, just like technique and coordination, listening skills can be improved with practice. This article will give you some tips on how you can gain that improvement.

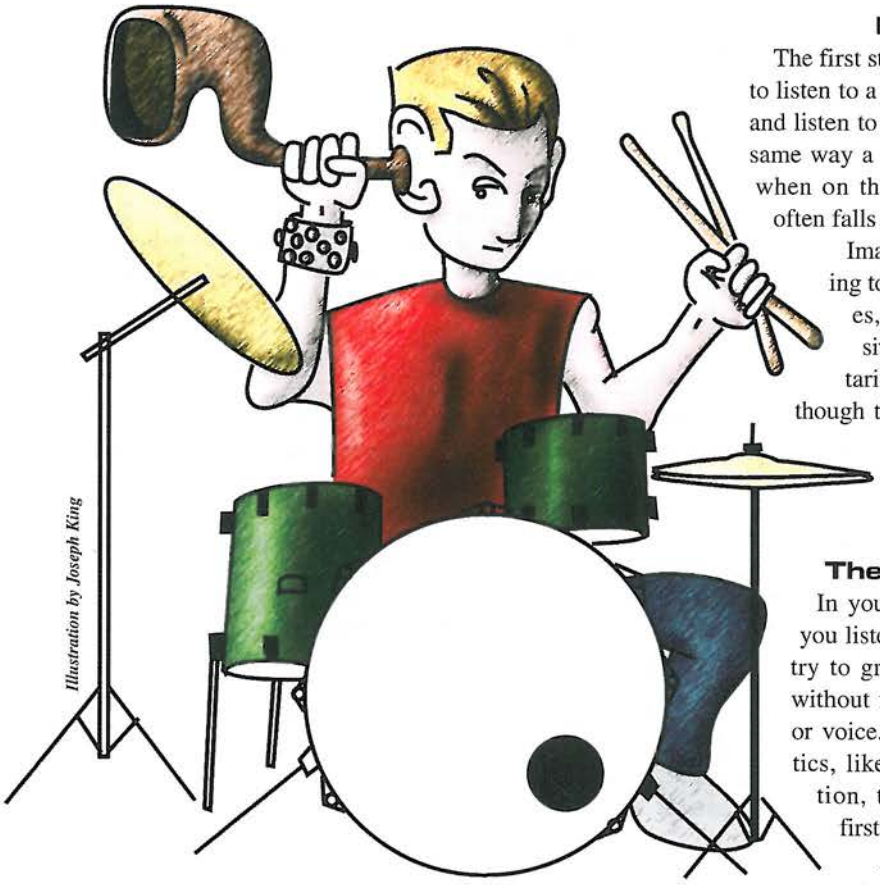


Illustration by Joseph King

First You Listen

The first step is to set aside some time each day to listen to a favorite recording. Choose one song, and listen to it many times. But be careful. In the same way a drummer sometimes relies on habits when on the bandstand, the untrained listener often falls into a "listening routine."

Imagine a drummer and a guitarist listening to the same song. As the tune progresses, the drummer listens almost exclusively to the drum track, while the guitarist focuses on the guitar track. Even though they were listening to the same piece of music, they develop very different perspectives because of their individual listening habits.

Then You REALLY Listen

In your case, try to break such habits. As you listen to your chosen song the first time, try to grasp the overall sound of the track, without focusing on any specific instrument or voice. Take notice of general characteristics, like the song's form, the instrumentation, the dynamics, and the mood. This first step is usually a revelation in itself.

After the initial listen, repeat the track, and this time focus on each instrument within the ensemble. Begin with the drums, and progress up to the lead instrument or voice. Carefully notice various aspects of each performance. What function does the specific instrument play? What is its dynamic level? Are there repeated patterns? Are there rhyth-

When playing with other musicians, always listen beyond the drumset. Focus on the sound of the entire ensemble as if you were sitting in the audience.

mic or melodic variations, and if so, when do they occur? Your goal is to gain an awareness of each instrument's specific contribution to the song.

Play the song again, and observe the relationships between the different instruments. For example, in a straight-ahead jazz track, listen to how the drums and the piano relate to one another. Do the rhythms on the snare drum match the comping patterns of the piano, or are they independent of one another? If the track features vocals, notice the interaction between each instrument and the lyrics. Rhythm tracks often emphasize the most important words. Regardless of style, there are many significant relationships that should be observed during each subsequent listen.

Finally, after carefully dissecting the contribution of each instrument, as well as the relationships between them, listen to the song from an overall perspective again. After training yourself to listen more critically, your overall listening experience should now include subtleties and nuances that you hadn't noticed before.

Then You Play Along

The next phase in your training is to repeat the above procedures while playing along with the track. Begin by playing strict time, without any fills or embellishments, while focusing your attention on one instrument at a time. Once again, start with the drums, then work up toward the lead instrument or vocal.

In the first pass, try to match the drummer's feel precisely. If it's a funk tune, pay careful attention to the spacing between the bass drum and snare. If it's a jazz tune, focus on the ride cymbal and hi-hat.

When listening to the bass track, continue to match the drummer's feel, but focus on the how the bass patterns relate to the drums. Is the bass player interpreting the pulse slightly ahead of the drums, slightly behind, or perfectly aligned? In most cases, the rhythmic relationship between the bass and drums creates the feel of the entire ensemble. After playing along and listening to the bass, continue with each instrument on the track, carefully noting any slight differences in rhythmic interpretation.

Now repeat the process, this time adding your own variations and fills. These should relate specifically to the phrasing of each instrument, one at a time. The instrument you're focusing on should be your guide to logical places for musical interaction on your part. Follow the dynamics and rhythms of that instrument's patterns, and establish a dialog between it and the drums. The idea is to let each instrument within the track spark unique and creative ideas from you.

Playing With Others

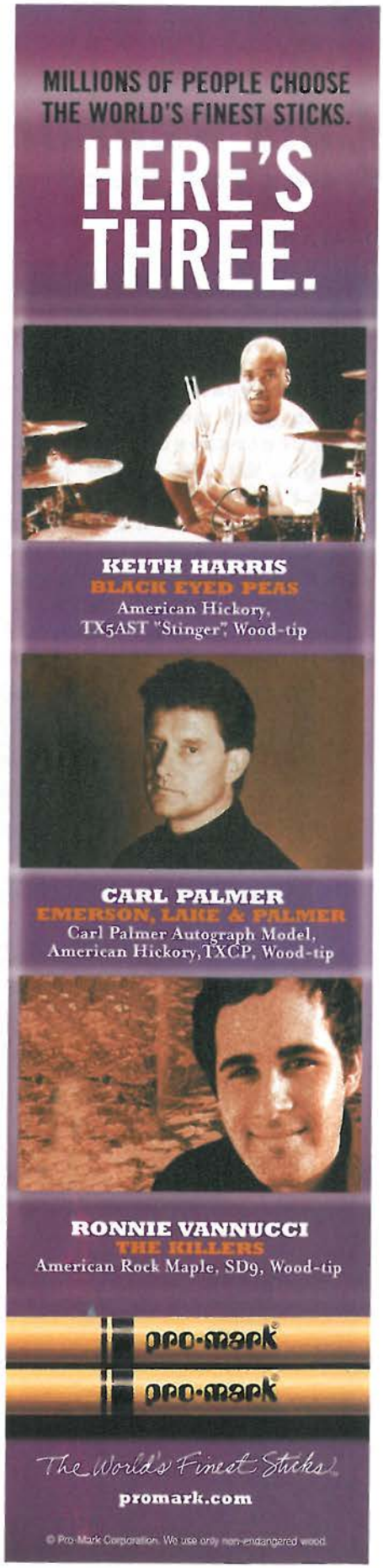
After listening closely and playing along to recordings, you'll have trained yourself to hear more attentively and with greater focus. Now it's time to apply your new listening skills to real-life musical situations.

When playing with other musicians, always listen *beyond* the drumset. Focus on the sound of the entire ensemble as if you were sitting in the audience. By mentally placing yourself in this position, general characteristics such as balance, blend, and rhythmic accuracy become apparent. This allows you to make any adjustments necessary to improve the overall sound of the group.

It's also beneficial to focus on specific instruments in the ensemble, in order to correct any rhythmic issues. This is especially important to ensure a solid, consistent groove and feel between rhythm-section instruments such as bass, drums, piano, and guitar.

Final Thoughts

Music is a collaborative art that relies heavily on the interaction between each player in the group. Through focused listening, a performer's mind is continually involved in that collaborative process. Developing your ability to listen perceptively—and respond accordingly—will make your musical experiences considerably more exciting and rewarding.



Carl Palmer
From The Beginning

by Ken Micallef

"I'm not very nostalgic," Carl Palmer says, recalling his years with Emerson, Lake & Palmer, the world's first progressive rock supergroup. "I do like to play some of the ELP classical interpretations now with my band, though. We do about forty concerts a year. I play 'Hoedown,' 'Barbarian,' and 'Fanfare.' When ELP was at its height, [the success and fame] was fantastic. But you don't realize it's happening at the time; it's all going so fast. The music is important to me, though. It has stayed with me, and this is why I still play it."

These days the mighty drummer—whose stinging single-stroke rolls, amazing speed, and innovations with electronic and classical percussion dazzled millions—still maintains a very busy schedule. "An avid athlete," by his own admission, Palmer practices every day and still finds time to run, swim, fence, and even bowl as he jets between homes in London and on the island of Cyprus.

With the release of their eponymous 1970 debut album, Emerson, Lake & Palmer matched pop-song melodies with classically inspired structures. Radio listeners were excited by this unusual mix via songs like "Lucky Man," while legions of budding prog-rock musicians were inspired by the instrumental precision of "Knife Edge" and Palmer's solo vehicle, "Tank." The band went on to record the groundbreaking *Tarkus* and the classical bombast–meets–*War Of The Worlds* epic, *Brain Salad Surgery*, before calling it quits in 1978.

A healthy bank account allowed Palmer to entertain any new musical direction, and in the early '80s the drummer chose to join another supergroup, Asia, who scored big with the hit "Heat Of The Moment." Carl also recorded a variety of instrumental and vocal projects; an excellent compilation of his various projects, *Do You Wanna Play, Carl?*, covers the highlights of his work between 1969 and 2001.

Now Sanctuary Records is releasing a two-DVD ELP documentary, *Beyond The Beginning*, which includes new interviews and rare footage of the band. Fans shouldn't read this as a hint of an ELP reunion, though. Says Palmer, "Keith and Greg are two completely different people. Always have been." So, chances are, Carl can be found in the near future running the English countryside, fencing somewhere on Cyprus, or playing out with his own band.

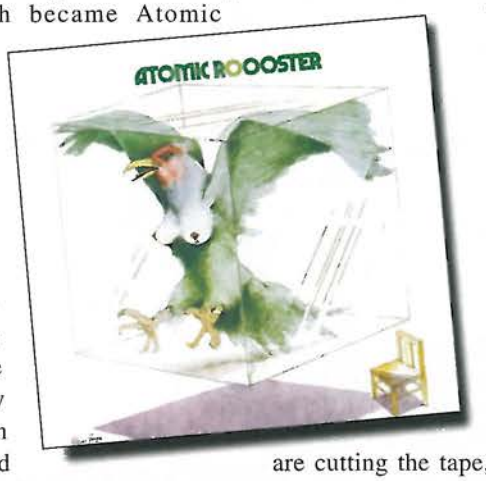
"The style I've got is high-energy," Palmer proclaims. "When I can't play like that anymore, I'll stop. But I'm always looking at being healthy, 'cause I like to play like a madman. Why should it be any different now that I'm fifty-four?"

We recently asked Carl to suppress his distaste for nostalgia, and chat about some of his greatest recordings. He happily obliged.

Atomic Rooster

Atomic Rooster (1969)

I had been in The Crazy World Of Arthur Brown; we had a hit with a song called "Fire." I was sixteen at the time. It was a number-1 single and album. But I left the band and returned to England to form my own band, which became Atomic Rooster. If you get the first Atomic Rooster album—the one with the chicken with large breasts on the cover—then you will hear me being born as a player. There is a drum solo on there that I am still very proud of today, on the cut "Decline And Fall." I was playing a Gretsch kit I had bought in 1968. The kit originally had a small bass drum, but when I got to the US I ordered a 24" bass drum from Manny's.



Emerson, Lake & Palmer

Tarkus (1971)

Tarkus was a big turning point, even though Greg Lake thought it was too far out there. I thought it was an interesting concept, but a bit childlike and comedic. I couldn't understand this armadillo with the tank tracks disappearing into the sea. It didn't have the adult flavor that I wanted that, say, Pink Floyd had done. That would have been a lot more meaningful. *Tarkus* was meant to be about dealing with chemical warfare and weapons of mass destruction. It could have been a film, but we dealt with it as a cartoon. The music is incredible, though.

"Tarkus" came from a drum pattern I had in 10/8...or 5/4—it's easier for drummers to think of it as 10/8. Anyway, Keith wrote a melody to it, and off it went. That was quite an interesting time. I was into the concept but not the story line. Greg didn't like that it was so complex. And Keith and I enjoyed the complex musicality. Regardless of our different opinions, it became one of our most successful albums.

We did a lot of splicing to record "Tarkus." It would have required a perfect twenty-minute performance for us to be satisfied. So we would record it in sections, make the amendments, re-record it, then move on to the next part. When you are editing with tape, you need to know exactly where you are cutting the tape, because if you have any cymbals overhanging, they will be cut off and you'll hear it instantly. We had to mark it all out like a roadmap. We did record the thing all in one go, and it was fantastic. But it wasn't as neat and tidy as we had already done when recording it in sections. Playing "Tarkus" live wasn't hard for us, though. We were always so well rehearsed, we could all play whatever was in our heads.

I was playing Ludwig by then; they sponsored me throughout the '70s. They made the concert toms, which I had grown to really like. I had been to see Ronnie Tutt with Elvis Presley at Lake Tahoe. Ronnie was a great drummer, and his single-headed drums sounded incredible. "I need some of that," I thought. Then I saw them in the Ludwig catalog, and I said, "Send them over!" They were great.

Emerson, Lake & Palmer

Pictures At An Exhibition (1972)

I played a role on that album that wasn't really a drummer's role. I did everything but keep time on that.

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I reinforced parts, played unison parts with Keith note for note. I did keep time in certain sections, but it really was more of a classical approach. There were timps, tubular bells, gongs—it was the beginning of the rock/classical drummer crossover period.

For a year, I had studied at the Royal Academy with James Blades, and at the Guild Hall of Music with Gilbert Webster. Prior to that I had private lessons in my hometown of Birmingham. Having said that, the most I ever learned about the drumset was from an American teacher named Bruce Gaylor, who I studied with when I was thirteen.

Emerson, Lake & Palmer
Brain Salad Surgery (1973)

That is the beginning of my using the stainless-steel drums. I believe this was also the first time that electronic drums were ever recorded. Nobody knew it at the time. There is a piece on *Brain Salad Surgery* called "Toccata" by Ginastera. In the middle there is a rather abstract section with lots of electronic sounds that are all triggered by the drums. I had a synth the size of a cigar box for each drum. And each sound was preprogrammed; I couldn't change the sound except with an octave divider that was made for me by the same engineer who designed Keith's Moog setup. Because of the electronic drums being so new, it was big news, and everyone in the UK knew about it. I performed on a television show called *Aquarius*, demonstrating how the electronic drums worked. Unfortunately, when we took it to America people didn't get it, they thought it was all keyboards, so we let it ride.

The stainless-steel kit was made by British Steel. It had all these beautiful engravings on the shells, which were done with a dentist's drill by a local jeweler. He copied hunting scenes and put them on the drums. The hoops were all Gretsch die-casts. The lugs were made out of copper with an English rose design. Being single-headed, they were easy to tune, even though the bass drum weighed 180 pounds. Ringo Starr bought that kit off me.

Emerson, Lake & Palmer
Love Beach (1978)

Love Beach was made under a lot of duress, because we were ready to break up. We had been touring extensively for nine years; we were well and truly fried. But the record company, Atlantic, begged us to make another album. They didn't really consider what would happen to the band if we did that, they just wanted to make money. But we knew that making an album was a foolish thing to attempt. ELP had set a very high standard musically, and now here we were trying to do something that wasn't coming naturally. Well, after many dinners and discussions, we succumbed.

We recorded in the Bahamas at Compass Point Studios, which was owned by Chris Blackwell, who owned the original Island Records. It was bad—the album was not very creative, not very inventive, and there was no new technology used at all. Plus the environment was wrong. If we had recorded it in New York the material might have fared better. But when you're looking at people laying on the beach, you don't get down to the nitty gritty of what you need to do to make a good record. We broke up after recording this album. We didn't argue, there were no money problems...we were just tired. So we took twelve years off!

My drumming was as good as it could be considering the music. It was hard to be inventive, except for one track that was a real steamer, "Canario." We adapted it from a classical piece, and it was fantastic. I'm still proud of that, and I still play it today with my own band. It's a shuffle, highly arranged with lots of counterpoint. ELP's version is among the top fifty pieces played throughout the world on the radio. That was the only piece on the album that was any good at all.

One PM
P.M. (1980)

A band of my own, a complete failure. I wanted a band that would play songs, not prog-rock music. Radio was horrible then, nothing happening in America or Europe. Progressive rock music had been completely swallowed up by the punk situation. I

"Slammin'!"

Anthony Roberts, Monitors · Tower of Power

"I'm in the studio with P.O.D and lovin' the i-5 on guitar cabs. Great punch in the upper mids and perfect for heavy guitars that need that special drive. Also fantastic on snare - it can sure handle some serious SPL's!"
Travis Wyrick, Producer, Engineer, Mixer - P.O.D., Charlie Daniels, Pillar

"So how does it sound? In a word, impressive. ...and on snare drum, it rocked hard. Overall, there's a clarity and openness to this mic that you don't hear from a lot of dynamics..."
Phil O'Keefe, EQ Magazine

"On the road I use it with The Dead and Phil Lesh and Friends. At home, I use it at the Phoenix Theatre in Petaluma with every act imaginable. From the top to the bottom, the i-5 sets a new standard!"
Ian DuBois, Monitors - Phil Lesh and Friends, The Dead

"Audix really delivers with the i-5. Performing well in about every application on which I tried it, the i-5 does justice to many sources both on stage and in the studio."
Karen Stackpole, Electronic Musician

"During our recent tour, I was very pleased with the results using the i-5 on guitar cabs. The sound was smooth and clear with great presence in the mix. The i-5 is rugged and solid. It qualifies as THE all-purpose dynamic workhorse in any mic collection."
Gary Hartung, FOH - Crosby, Stills & Nash

"The i-5 is an awesome utility mic—it is much tougher and sounds becter than the 'old faithful' I am now able to replace."
Dave Rat, Rat Sound

"I've used the same mic on snare drum for recording and live sound applications for 30 years. I've tried other mics from time to time but always returned to the old favorite. Recently, I tried the Audix i-5. No matter what style of music, the i-5 sounds great and now has become my new choice for snare drum."
Tom Edmonds, Engineer - Lenny Kravitz

"I have dreamed of this day—I can now retire the last of my Shure SM57's. Now that I've been exposed to the future, why would I want to live in the past?"
Eugene "Gino" Mulcahy, Lead Audio Engineer - Mohegan Sun

"This mic is slammin'! And if you're tired of having the cap of your snare mic being blown into pieces from a heavy stick hit—you'll love the i-5!"
Anthony Roberts, Monitors - Tower of Power

"On guitar amps the i-5, compared to the 57, was less hyped in the high mids, but had a fuller overall tone...I'm really digging using the i-5 and will be buying the review mics I was sent, if that tells you anything."
Larry Crane, Tape-Op Magazine

"The i-5 is very impressive as a bass mic. It handles the SPL's and captures the clarity of the notes while still maintaining the warmth of the low end. It's a great new tool."
Deanne Franklin, FOH - Tom Waits

"With the i-5 on my snare drum, there's just no going back. I've just started using it on guitar with very good results there too. The i-5; it's my new little weapon."
Neil Citron, Head Engineer - The Mothership

"The i-5 is truly a multi-purpose microphone. It sounds great on a wide variety of sources, but it particularly shines on snare drums and toms...Sounds like a winner in my book."
Mark Parsons, Modern Drummer

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John Gatski, Pro Audio Review

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wanted to try something different. I got heavily slagged for playing four on the floor, but honestly, I would have joined The Beatles if I had been given half the chance. I wanted to go play some good songs, but this was a complete failure. I never got to America with it, it was released by BMG in the US as an import. We had American players like guitarist Barry Finnerty and the bass player from Alice Cooper's band, but it was absolute rubbish.

Asia

Asia (1982)

I was able to fulfill my dream of playing songs with Asia. Our first album sold four and a half million copies right out of the box. Asia was a prog rock band that played pop tunes; our single "Heat Of The Moment" was Number-1 for nine weeks in the US. The album went to Number-1 as well. Besides the pop songs, there were songs like "Wildest Dreams," which was a four-minute prog rock song condensed for radio. That was a monumental album for me and a direction that ELP might have followed. But it didn't sustain because people started writing too commercially. We lost our fans who liked ELP, Yes, and King Crimson. [Asia's members came from those bands.] Then we watered it down for the second album.

Asia never sounded good live. Certain individuals were always intoxicated. And the label, Geffen, began dictating the songs. John Kalodner, the A&R man for Geffen, said that he wanted the songs to have twenty-second instrumental intros, because they had discovered that American deejays couldn't talk longer than twenty seconds over any intro. He also said that every second line in the choruses should rhyme, to make sure they got remembered. That was the kind of stress that was being put on bands, which was totally ridiculous.

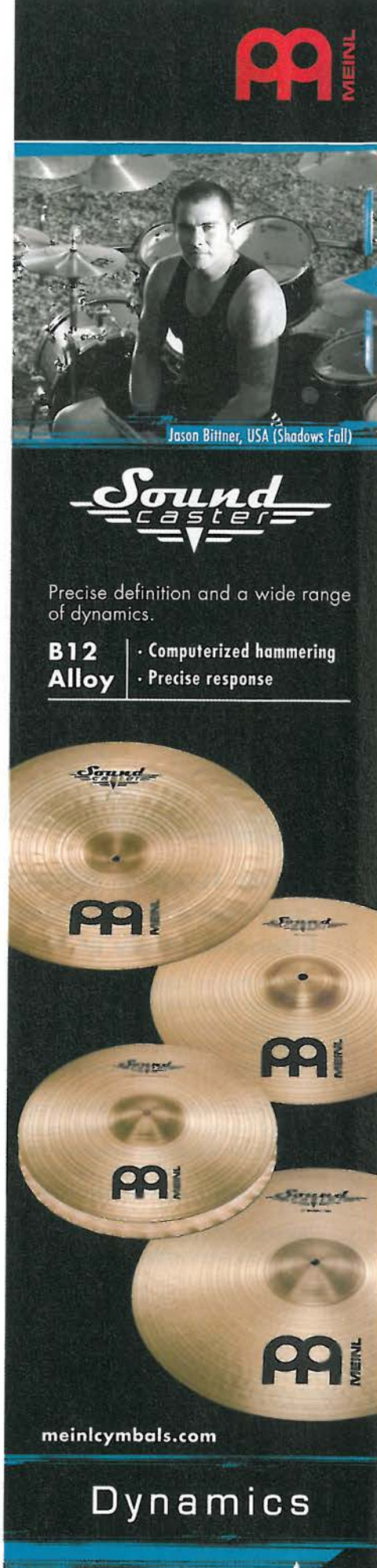
I didn't record any differently with Asia. I never changed cymbals for the studio, I never changed drumheads for the studio, and I never tuned my drums differently. I am interested in being recorded the way I play, and if I'm in a band it's because the other musicians like what I do. I want to be recorded honestly. With Asia I didn't do anything differently except cut a hole in the bass drum head. I've done nothing differently in the last forty years. I don't like tape on the heads, I would rather tune them correctly and use effects on the mixing board to cut off the ring. But I don't like a manufactured sound. With Asia I played a Premier drumset, single-headed, with all-metal shells. Premier covered everything, not just drums, so I used those drums for a couple tours. But the hardware was bad and kept breaking. Then I made a mistake and went with a Japanese company. Those drums are just not me.

Carl Palmer

Working Live, Vols. 1 And 2 (2004)

Those were recorded here in the UK at the famous rock club The Robin Hood 2. I discovered years ago that some of the best recordings were live performances—if you could capture them. I decided that if I could record my new group digitally, it would be the best thing to do.

I have two incredible guitarists in my band. I've recorded everything from Prokofiev's "Enemy God" to Aaron Copeland's "Fanfare" to Bartok's "Barbarian." Recently I've re-recorded some things I wrote with Joe Walsh in the '70s. I've also picked up things by Carl Orff, and there's a piece I wrote called "Bullfrog." I'm going to record one more album with two or three ELP tracks on it, as well as music by Henry Mancini and "Romeo & Juliet" by Prokofiev. I decided that if I could record all the classical pieces I like with a guitar-based group and not



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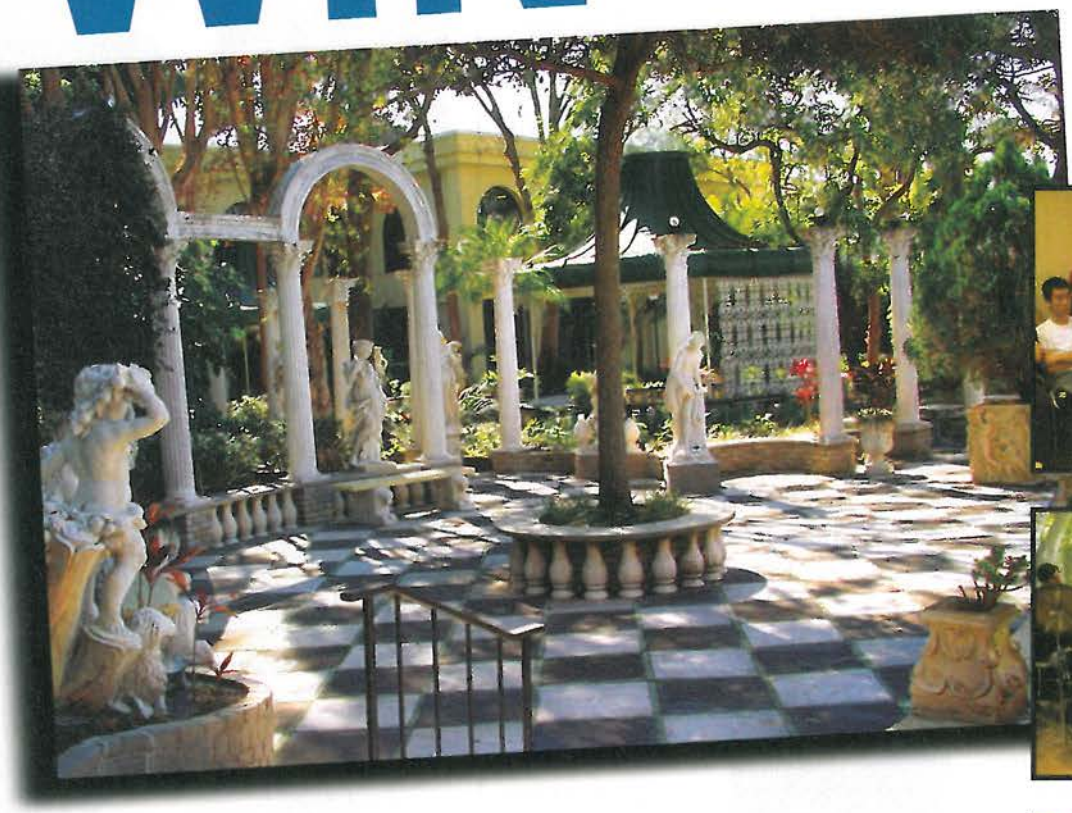

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keyboards, I'd be happy, because it's a lot more rock. It's rawer and cruder, but it just does it for me. Here in Europe, if I do new prog-rock material, the chance of it getting played is remote. With these classical pieces I manage to get them racked in every store in the UK. Believe it or not, I've just recorded a prog-rock session for MTV Bucharest!

These days I play a Brady Jara ply set, which is fantastic, and a kit made of melted down Paiste 2002 cymbals. I'm a drum whore, really.

Filling In The Holes

Emerson, Lake & Palmer
Emerson, Lake & Palmer (1970)
An auspicious debut, featuring Carl's feature, "Tank," plus the perennial fave "Lucky Man." And don't miss Carl's fleet brush work on "Take A Pebble."

Emerson, Lake & Palmer
Trilogy (1972)
Features the hit "From The Beginning" as well as ELP's first Aaron Copeland number, an impossibly riled-up "Hoedown."

Emerson, Lake & Palmer
Welcome Back, My Friends, To The Show That Never Ends—Ladies And Gentlemen... (1974)
In a typical case of flirting with overkill, ELP's live opus was a *triple* album.

Emerson, Lake & Palmer
Works Vol. 1 (1977)
A double album with the players getting one side each to do their own thing. Carl took the opportunity to work in a big band vein with Harry South, as well as collaborate with Joe Walsh of James Gang/Eagles fame. Side 4 features the trio on another Aaron Copeland classic, "Fanfare For The Common Man," here recast as a funky prog workout. A hit, no less!

Emerson, Lake & Palmer
Works Vol. 2 (1977)
The cracks were beginning to show on this patchwork of odd tracks, though Lake's classic "I Believe In Father Christmas" perhaps has more legs than any other ELP track.

Emerson, Lake & Palmer
In Concert (1979)
As should be clear by now, ELP had no problem plundering the classical cannon. The version of Henry Mancini's "Peter Gunn Theme" showed they weren't shy about re-imagining sophisticated noir jazz either.

Emerson, Lake & Palmer
Black Moon (1992),
In The Hot Seat (1994)
Early-'90s reunion albums. Not a ton of sales, but an excuse for Carl to get back with his mates, do some solid touring, and turn on the new kids to the power of prog.

Other Bits

The Craig:
"I Must Be Mad" single (1966)

Chris Farlowe & The Thunderbirds:
"Yesterday's Papers" single (1967)

The Crazy World Of Arthur Brown:
"What's Happening" single B-side (1968)

Asia:
Alpha (1983),
Astra (1985)

3:
To The Power Of Three (1988)

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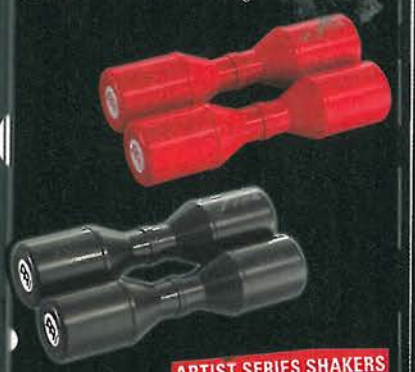

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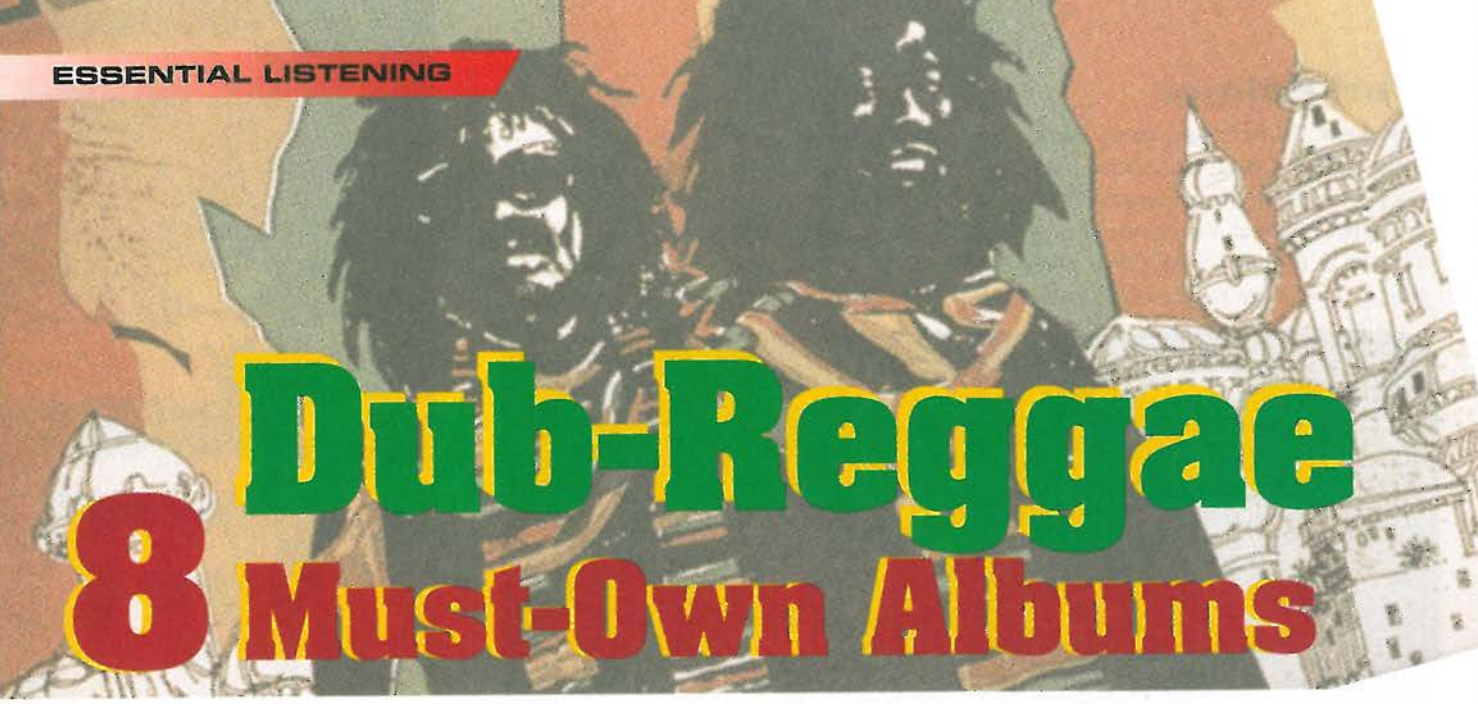


8 Dub-Reggae Must-Own Albums

by Ryan Moore

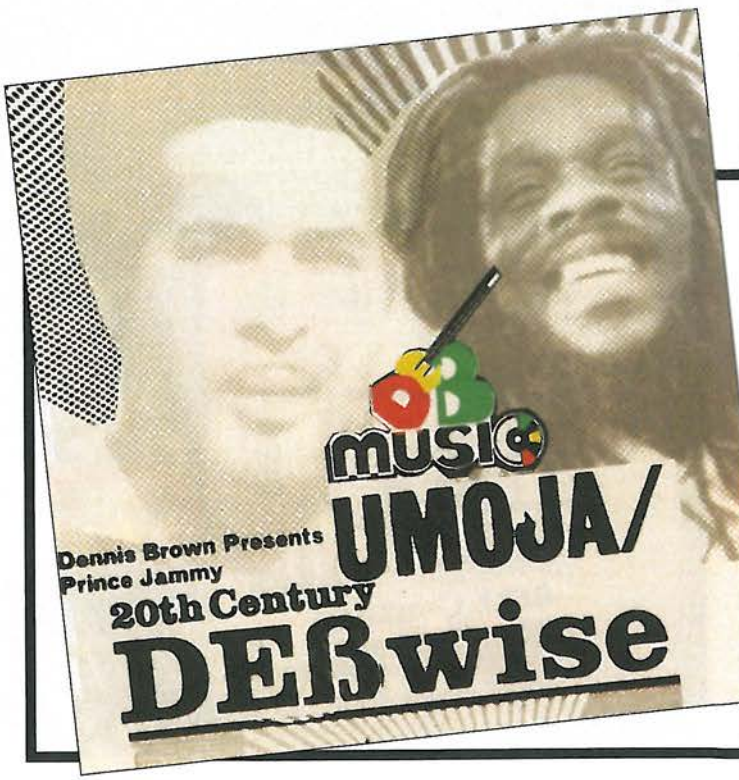
Since the discovery and development of the innovative mixing style in Jamaica during the late '60s and '70s, dub's influence has spread out into the world like a shock wave, changing modern music production along the way.

In the Kingston studio of King Tubby, what had started out as a cost-effective way to fill up a b-side with a vocal-less instrumental version soon developed into a new art form, where the mixer literally plays the desk faders and the studio itself like an instrument to create a new interpretation of the original track. Dub is the "original remix" music.

What's great about dub from a drumming perspective is that the music is stripped down to the bare essentials, leaving only a solid foundation of drums and bass to underpin events. Put under the microscope in this way, the listener can really appreciate the formidable timing and consistency displayed by the top reggae drummers.

The selections here represent some of the very best from dub's "golden" era, from 1974 to 1981, and also highlight some stellar moments from the greatest drummers in reggae music.

For any readers wishing to explore this genre further, I highly recommend investigating some of the quality vintage dub and reggae material now reissued on specialist labels like Pressure Sounds and Blood And Fire.



King Tubbys
Meets Rockers Uptown
(Shanachie / Clocktower / Yard Records)
Carlton Barrett

This is widely considered the all-time greatest dub album. King Tubby's genius on the mixing desk transforms what were originally average-sounding vocal tracks into stellar examples of the power of dub. Carlton Barrett's drumming is far wilder and less restrained here than what we are used to hearing on his more widely known work with Bob Marley & The Wailers. Stunning, jazzy fills are unleashed from nowhere, and the riffs on his trademark timbale-like snare are simply not to be believed—especially on the title track. A perfect showcase for the talents of this highly original and unique player. Incredibly, this album still lacks a definitive reissue version. But for those able to play vinyl, the Jamaican-pressed LP on the Yard label remains the best example I've heard of this essential release.

Black Uhuru
Sinsemilla (Island)
Sly Dunbar

Though officially a vocal album, this is one of the finest examples of Sly Dunbar's drumming. Recorded through the drum-friendly API console at Channel One studio, Sly's beats are pushed to the fore of the mix in what has to be one of the finest examples of a drumming-led album. The eight tracks were cut in a single day without the musicians ever hearing the songs beforehand, which is amazing when you consider Sly managed to come up with an innovative new approach for each number. Among Sly's signature beats are the snare and hat interplay on the title track. This release is also where his experiments with Syndrums (inspired by M's "Pop Muzik") really gelled, and it's here that he came up with funky overdubbed patterns that were utilized to good effect on many future productions with Black Uhuru and other artists.

Various
Scientist Rids The World Of The Evil Curse Of The Vampires (Greensleeves Records)
Style Scott

The best in the early 1980s Scientist-themed dub album series features the sparse sounds of the Roots Radics studio band, who moved in to fill the gap at Channel One left by Sly & The Revolutionaries' departure. Drummer Lincoln "Style" Scott's minimal but impossibly solid approach epitomizes the early dancehall style. Some of the tempos are incredibly slow, yet Style nails the groove like a champion, propelling the tracks with his metronomic but hugely swinging hi-hat work. Scott is considered by

Dennis Brown
Presents Umoja / 20th Century DEBwise
(Blood and Fire)
Sly Dunbar

This double-album reissue collection showcases down and dirty tracks featuring Channel One's Revolutionaries house band at their peak in the late '70s. The disco-derived four-on-the-floor "rockers" rhythms are the perfect foil for Tubby's successor, Prince Jammy, to work his more aggressive dub mix tactics upon. Check out how great the percussion parts are from "Skully" Simms and "Sticky" Thompson; they are so locked in with Sly, it sounds like they could keep it up for hours on end!

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Material Jingles: Solid brass
Frame: ABS
Features Padded soft grip for more playing comfort
Ergonomic design
Available as hand held or mountable versions
Guiro style playing surface
"Sandwich" construction
Colours Black

Nickelsilver jingle tambourines produce a bright sound that projects well.

Material Jingles: Nickelsilver plated steel
Frame: ABS
Features Padded soft grip for more playing comfort
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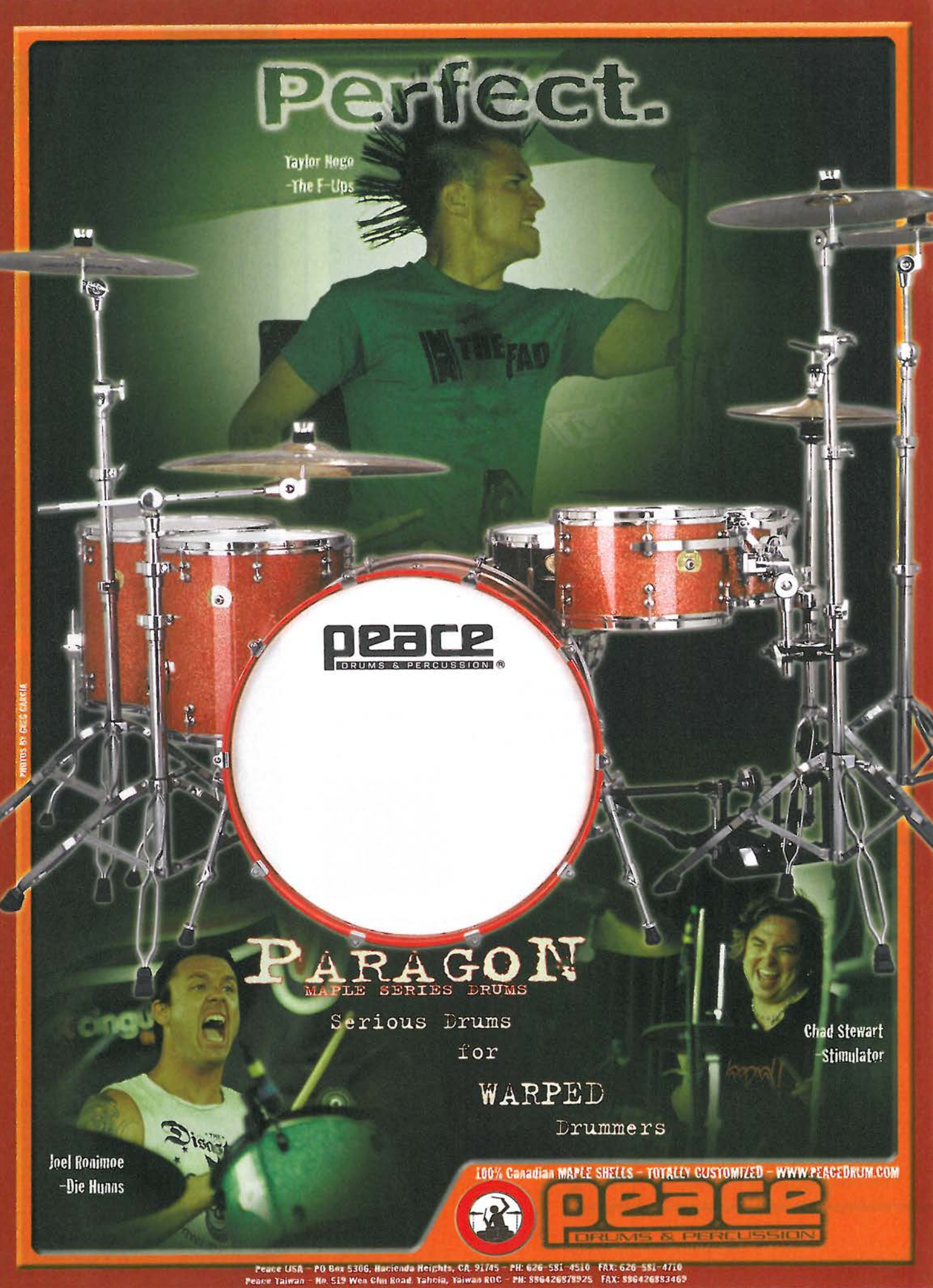
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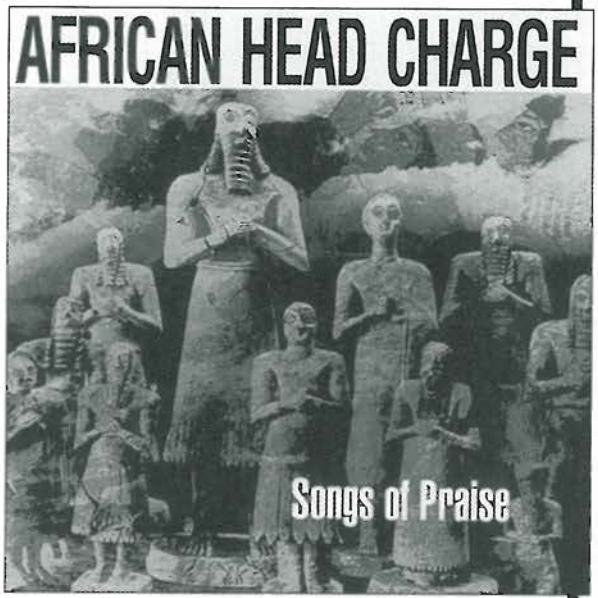
African Head Charge
Songs Of Praise
(On-U Sound)
Style Scott,
Bonjo Iyabinghi Noah



The only post-1981 album here, this vehicle for Jamaican percussionist Bonjo Iyabinghi Noah (who was raised in a rural village and trained in folk "Burru" drumming traditions) pairs Style Scott with the master percussionist under the auspices of London-based producer Adrian Sherwood. While the music sometimes voyages into outright experimental territory, I find the innovative fusion of both futuristic and ancient elements in the African Head Charge material to be endlessly fascinating. Plus, the beats are top notch.

some to be the John Bonham of reggae drums, and his pounding beats exude a raw confidence rarely witnessed on recordings of any genre.

Various
Studio One Dub—The Original (Soul Jazz)
Fil Callender, Leroy "Horsemouth" Wallace, Joe Isaacs, Vin Morgan, Lloyd Knibb

While not known for having great dub mixes, the Studio One label dub releases are still well worth checking out, mainly due to the quality of the basic instrumental tracks. Studio One's classic tracks function like a

Rosetta stone of reggae. And they continue to inform productions to this day, as numerous musicians and producers have oft engaged in reworkings of these original ideas. Just like with Motown, the studio musicians of Studio One were never properly credited on the liner notes. But based on the era of this collection, its likely that Fil Callender and Horsemouth Wallace played on the bulk of these cuts. Studio One is an essential link in understanding the history of reggae.

Also Check Out

Black Uhuru, The Dub Factor (Taxi/Island)
Keith Hudson, Pick A Dub (Blood And Fire)
Prince Jammy, In Lion Dub Style (Jammys)
Lee Perry, Super Ape (Island)
Ini Kamoze, Ini Kamoze (Taxi/Island)
Harry Mudie Meets King Tubby, In Dub Conference Vol. 1 (Moodisc)

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"Sandwich" construction
Colours Blue
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Brass jingle tambourines deliver a very warm, yet cutting sound.

Material Jingles: Solid brass
Frame: ABS
Features Padded soft grip for more playing comfort
Ergonomic design
Available as hand held or mountable versions
Guiro style playing surface
"Sandwich" construction
Colours Black

Nickelsilver jingle tambourines produce a bright sound that projects well.

Material Jingles: Nickelsilver plated steel
Frame: ABS
Features Padded soft grip for more playing comfort
Ergonomic design
Available as hand held or mountable versions
Guiro style playing surface
"Sandwich" construction
Colours Black
Red

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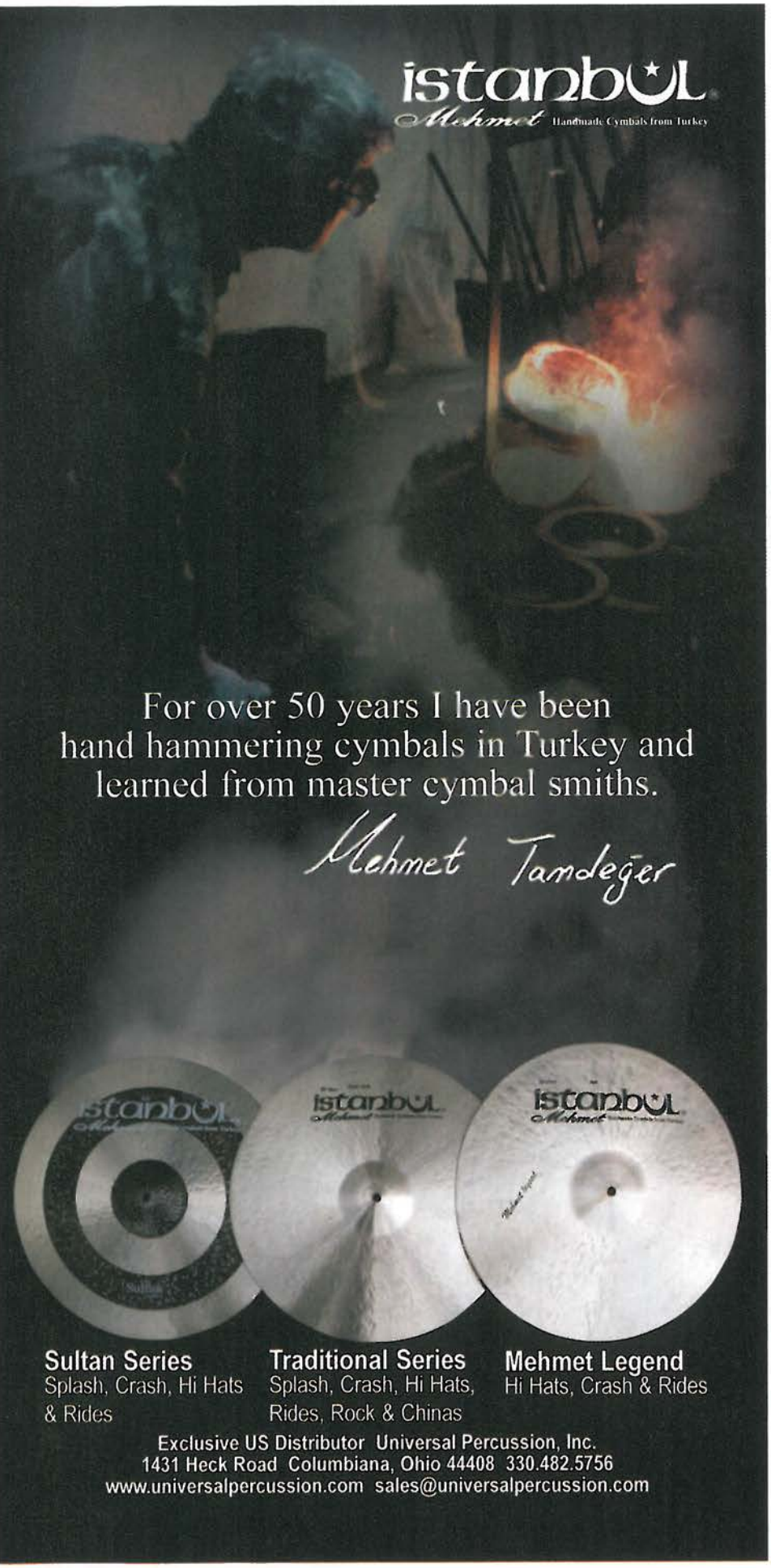

King Tubby
Presents The Roots Of Dub
(Moll-Selekta / Clocktower)

Carlton "Santa" Davis,
Basil "Benbow" Creary

An early King Tubby dub album (not to be confused with the similarly titled *Dub From The Roots)* showcasing mid-'70s tracks from producer Bunny Lee, and featuring the Philly soul-inspired drumming style known as "flying cymbals" or "flyers." I've always enjoyed the mellow sound, musical mix, and energetic drumming on this album. The drummers must have possessed a ton of stamina to maintain the swinging 8th notes on the hats at some of these tempos. To further accentuate the effect of the open-hat sizzle in "flyers," King Tubby rigged up special high-pass filters in his studio to EQ and thin out the sound.

Joe Gibbs
African Dub Chapter Three
(Joe Gibbs)

Sly Dunbar

This was the breakthrough record that really turned on the punks and rock music fans to dub in a big way in the late '70s. The extra sound effects like explosions, sirens, and cuckoo clocks chiming in the mix sound a little gimmicky now, but at the time people could not believe how exciting and new this sounded. Playing mainly in the uptempo rockers style, Sly Dunbar is nothing less than the star of the show here on what are mostly updated Studio One rhythms. On the few tracks with old-school "one drop" beats, he shows that the student has become a master by interpreting the style with a level of precision never quite attained by his Studio One "teachers." Of the entire selection, this one is also the best all-round party record—put it on and let the good times roll!

Ryan Moore's Twilight Circus Dub Sound System is one of the most highly regarded acts on the contemporary dub scene. A multi-instrumentalist, Moore plays and mixes all of Twilight Circus's tracks himself. Moore was profiled in the February 2000 issue of Modern Drummer. *For more information, go to www.twilightcircus.com.*

MD Radio

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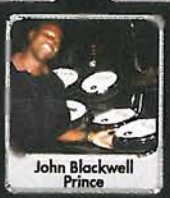

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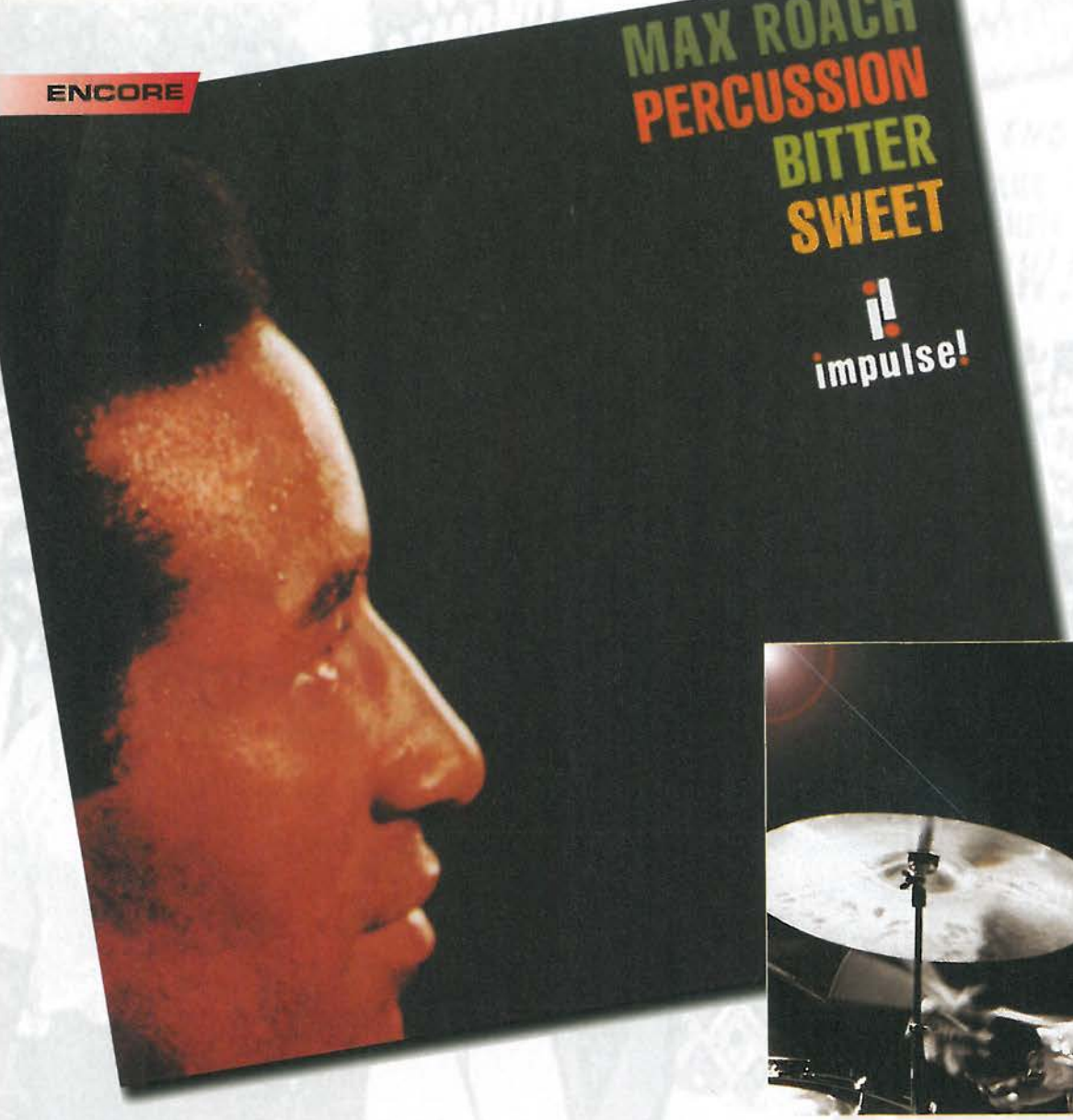

Max Roach Percussion Bitter Sweet

Max Roach (dr), Booker Little (trp), Eric Dolphy (al sx, bs cl, fl), Julian Priester (tbn), Clifford Jordan (tn sx), Mal Waldron (pno), Art Davis (bs), Abbey Lincoln (vcl), Carlos "Patato" Valdez (congas), Carlos "Totico" Eugenio (cowbell)

From the get-go the message is clear: Hang on, there's no looking back. The '60s have arrived.

This 1961 Impulse Records session is explosive, iconoclastic, and seminally political, radiating both rage and transcendent elation. Those who still thought of Max as a bopper awoke to find the master penning and playing tunes on the cutting edge. Max is brilliant here at breaking the rules because he helped *write* them.

A previous LP, *Freedom Now Suite*, more commonly recognized as a classic, employed a similar direction, also with a political edge and themes of black empowerment. But *Bitter Sweet* survives the test of time as a more fully realized, focused work. It's an underrecognized classic featuring peak work from a tremendous lineup.

"Garvey's Ghost" opens with Max's African 6/8 groove. The crunchy, bouncing-off-the-wall live sound totters on distortion. Thick chord clusters burst in, topped by Lincoln's eerie wordless vocals. The harmonic tension makes neck hairs bristle, and that intensity never wanes. Throughout the disc, Max delivers inspired solos of mini-structural statements that—much like a sax solo—build between paused "breaths."

The soulful, defiant ballad "Mendacity" comments on crooked politicos along with images of denied civil rights and lynching. Dolphy's dam-bursting alto solo is a plaintive, bluesy cry that's one of his best on record.

"Man From South Africa" is essentially a 7/4 blues, but Max and bassist Art Davis liberate the groove, alternating between outlining the 1-2/1-2/1-2-3 theme and riding straight through. Max and soloists phrase with effortless freedom, making the odd meter almost superfluous. Everything here is torridly "in the moment."

This album comprises forty minutes of strong personal vision—and represents some of Max's best post-bop drumming. And Max's musical foreshadowing *was* correct: The new decade was to be both tumultuous and inspiring.

Jeff Potter

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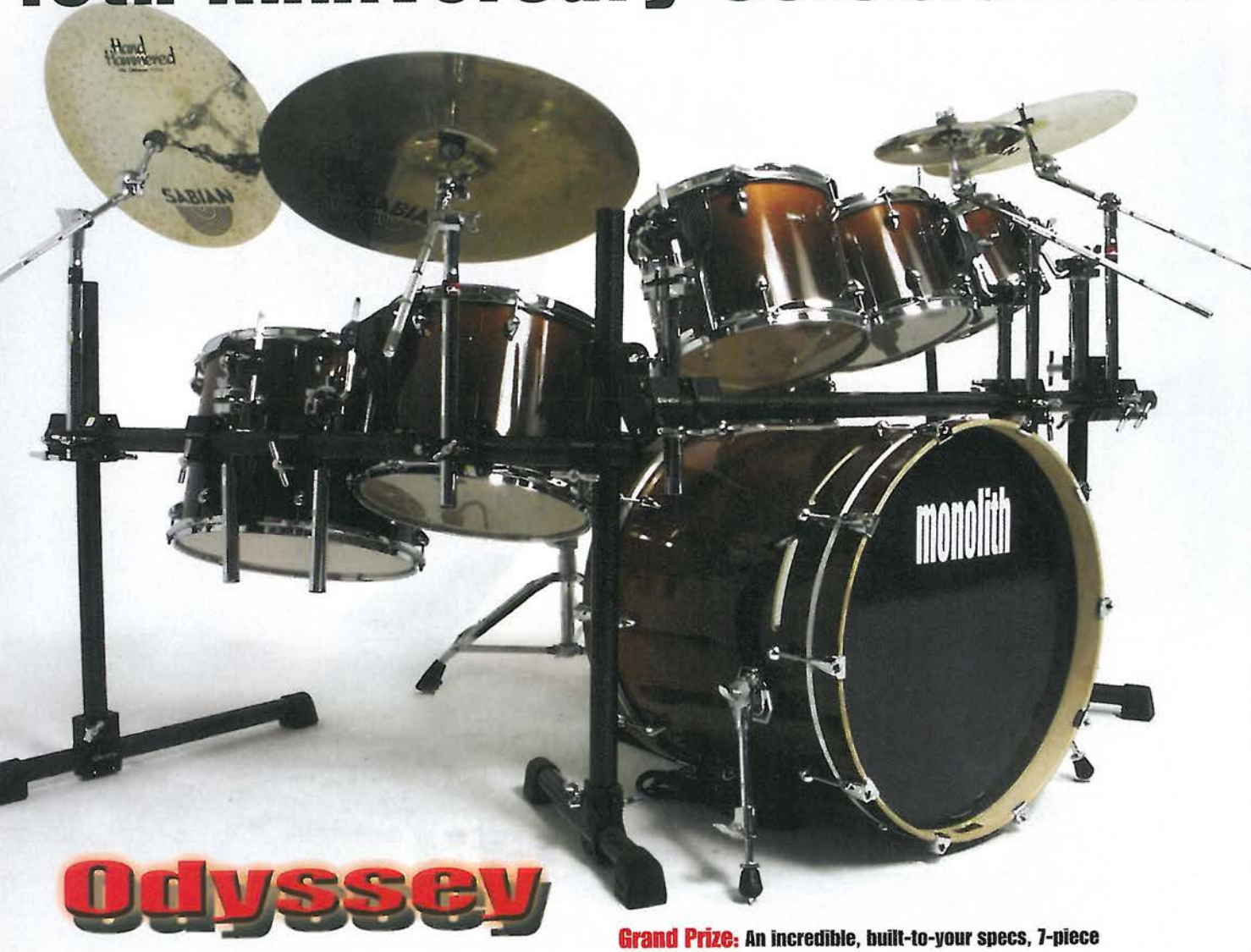

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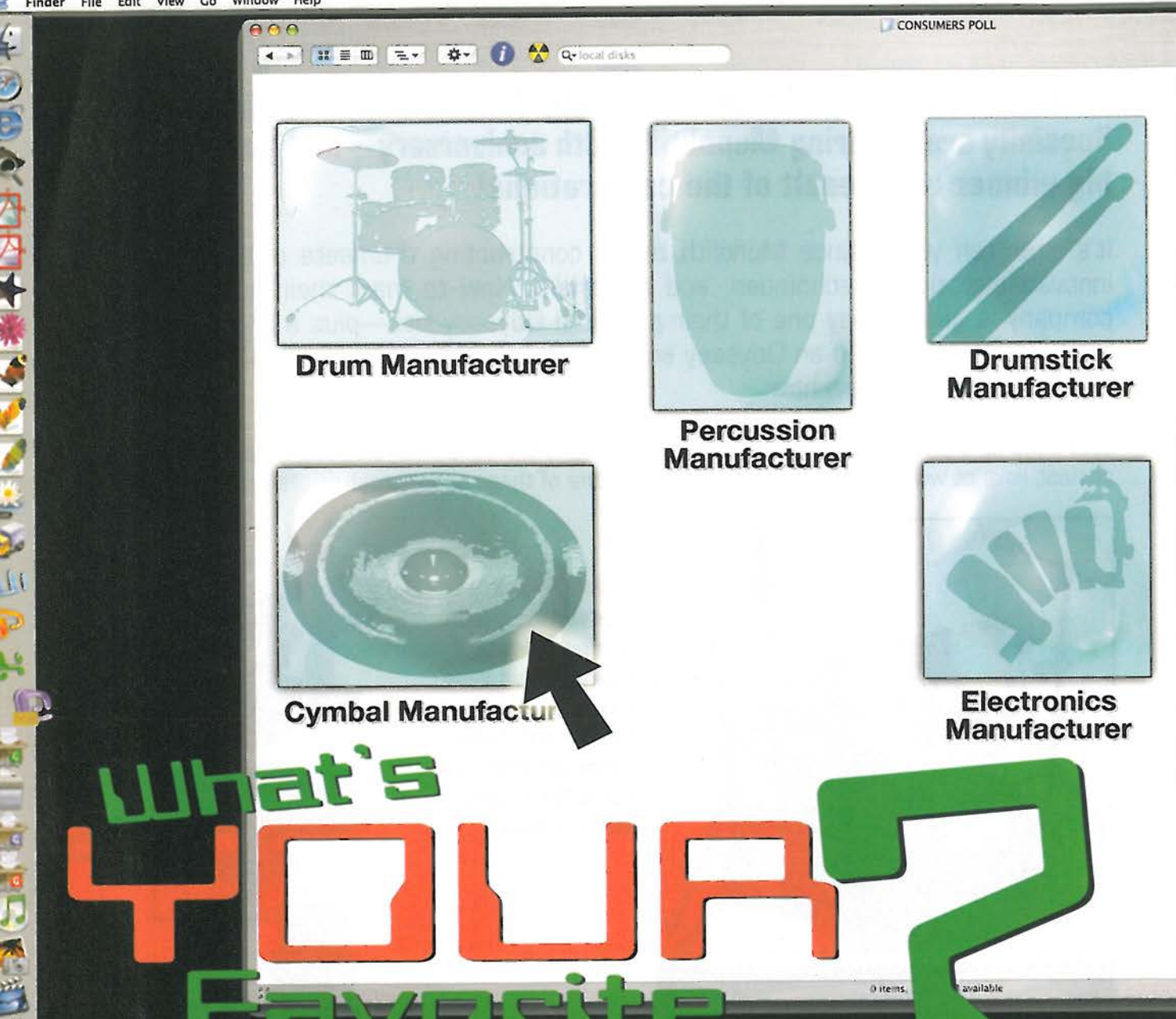

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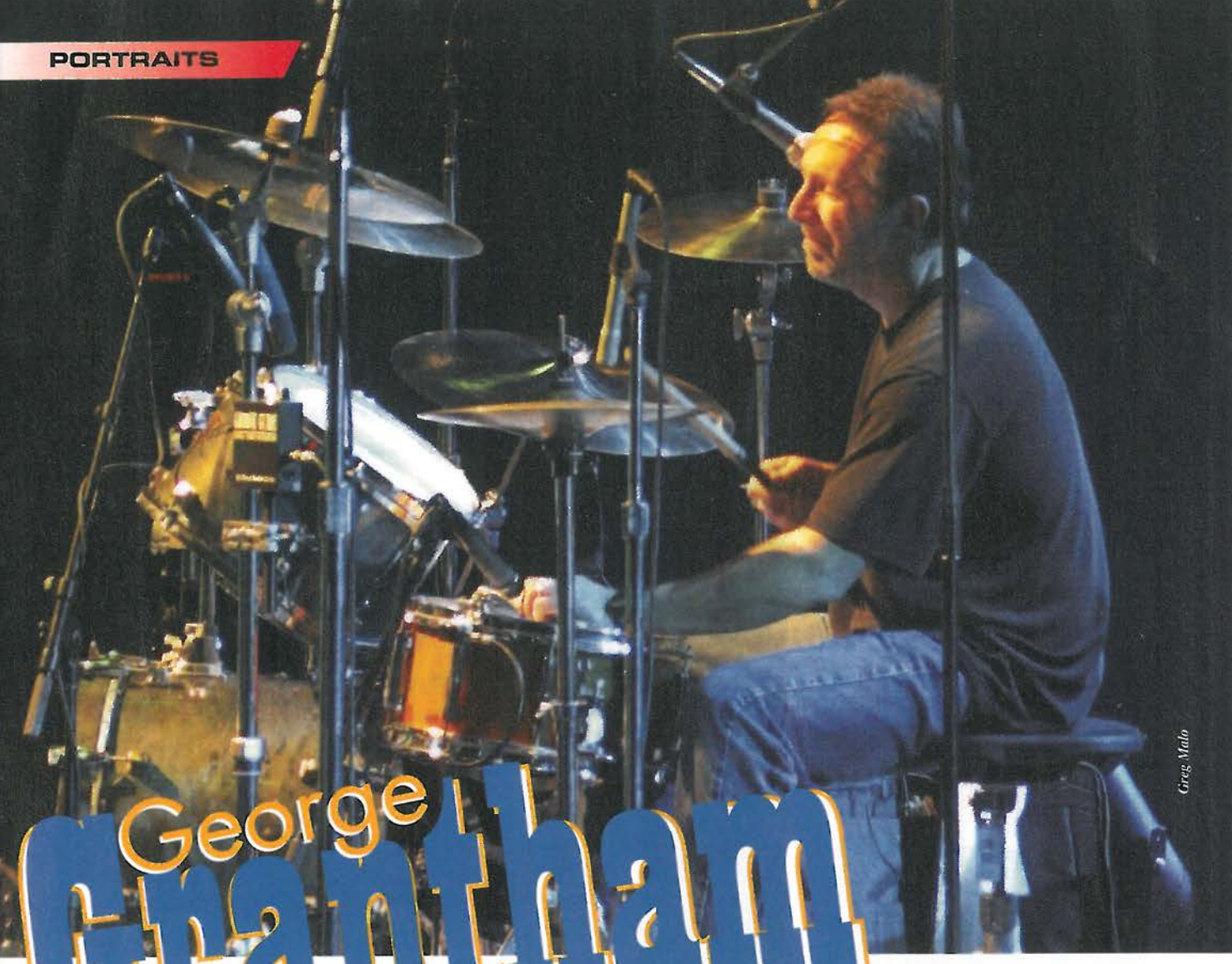

Greg Malo

George Grantham

Country Rock Original

by Al Saxon

In the late 1960s and early '70s, two divergent styles of American popular music—country and rock 'n' roll—intersected when young rock musicians began to play "electric" country music. Thus was born the genre of "country rock," originally epitomized by The Byrds and Buffalo Springfield. The breakup of The Byrds begat an offshoot known as The Flying Burrito Brothers. When Buffalo Springfield split, members Richie Furay and Jim Messina recruited bassist Randy Meisner,pedal-steel virtuoso Randy Young, and drummer George Grantham to help them create a new endeavor called Poco.

Poco's exciting live performances received critical and popular acclaim, and their country-tinged harmonic style inspired later superstars like Loggins & Messina and The Eagles. Though the group has achieved only sporadic success with radio airplay over the years, they've remained a major influence on rock and country bands alike.

Early in their career, Poco's performances were anchored by George Grantham. His drumming style combined the subtlety of a jazz artist with the sheer joy and tempo of rock 'n' roll. His fills demonstrated superb musical taste. Meanwhile, his unmistakable high harmony parts were a distinctive element of the group's trademark vocal blend.

Grantham left Poco in 1977, and spent years touring in support of various country artists. In 2002, however, he re-joined Rusty Young, Paul Cotton (who replaced Jim Messina in 1971), and new bass player Jack Sundrud to help make *Running Horse*, Poco's first recording in thirteen years. Grantham then spent the next two years touring with the group, enjoying their renewed visibility and popularity. This interview was conducted during that touring period.

Regrettably, George Grantham suffered a stroke in August of 2004 while on tour in New England. Hopes are high for his recovery and return to the band.

MD: You formally left Poco in the late 1970s. Although you toured briefly with them in the 1980s and later did a reunion tour, was it difficult coming back as a full-time member in 2002 after such a long period?

George: Not at all. It took very little rehearsal, because we just remembered everything. I've been playing with Rusty for over thirty-five years and with Paul for over thirty. We know the songs so well, it's a breeze. The process wasn't like work at all; it was very enjoyable.

MD: Has the dynamic in the band changed, in terms of the new songs?

George: A little. Rusty and Paul always represent the traditional Poco thing, from the days when Richie Furay fronted the band, as well as all the music that followed. Jack, our new bass player, has added a new flavor that's really kind of cool. His playing and songwriting add a new element to the established Poco sound. He's helped the band grow.

MD: Does Jack's presence affect your playing, in terms of locking in with a bass player who may have a different style than the players who preceded him?

George: A good musician always has to adjust. When you haven't played with someone before, it takes a little time to get used to each other's style. If you tend to lay it back, or play on top, or play more R&B style or more country, you have to adjust. It just takes some rehearsing and playing a few gigs. But in our case the process has been very easy and comfortable. We all love the same kind of music, so our playing styles are already developed around that similar taste.

MD: When you began, Poco was somewhat revolutionary in terms of its country elements. Wasn't most country music

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George Grantham

then based on a standard two-beat, boom-chick type of sound, or a straightforward "train" rhythm?

George: Oh yeah!

MD: What influenced your interpretation of some of the songs that you recorded early on?

George: My early drumming influences were jazz drummers. That's what I fell in love with and pursued as a player when developing my own style. The first rock music I seriously got interested in was The Beatles. I tried to incorporate my style into the rock sound of the British Invasion. That's what we played at the time. I tried not to overplay it too much—to play the songs, but with a little bit of the jazz thing in there.

The band that Rusty and I were in back in the late '60s, Boenzee Cryque, was playing mostly British stuff. Then along came Buffalo Springfield, who just blew us away. They were a great band playing country rock that didn't sound like the music out of Nashville. It was creative and fresh, and we just fell in love with it. The drummer, Dewey Martin, didn't play "country" drums at all. He was very creative, especially with his bass drum foot. All the guys in that band were that way: They had their country influences, but they also had folk, rock, and more.

It wasn't much of a stretch for us to go in that direction ourselves, because Rusty's background *is* in country. He had played in country bands before getting into rock 'n' roll. And what Buffalo Springfield started carried over into how I wanted to interpret the "country" drumming I was doing with Poco. I didn't want to get traditional; I wanted to expand on the different style that I liked.

MD: You did some very creative things in your early days with Poco. For example, on one of the early live albums, you open a song playing paradiddles on cowbell and snare drum.

George: Well, it's a variation of a paradiddle. I grew up on rudiments and reading when I played in the school orchestra. Before that live album was recorded, I was just playing around one day, and I came up with a pattern that allows me to get a sort of Latin thing going. If I hadn't

known about paradiddles I would never have come up with it.

MD: In the time after you originally left Poco, you did a lot of touring with country artists. How does that role differ from what you do now with the band?

George: It differs a lot. I've worked with Steve Wariner, Ricky Skaggs, Lee Greenwood, and Ronnie McDowell. But that is all a different style. The thing I've always loved about Poco is that, to me, it's home. These guys are like my family, and this music was *ours*. We created it together, and it's our art. So I play a much larger role in Poco. For one thing, while I've sung on some of my touring gigs and not on others, in Poco I've always been the "high harmony drummer." Also, I can contribute to creating the songs that we record.

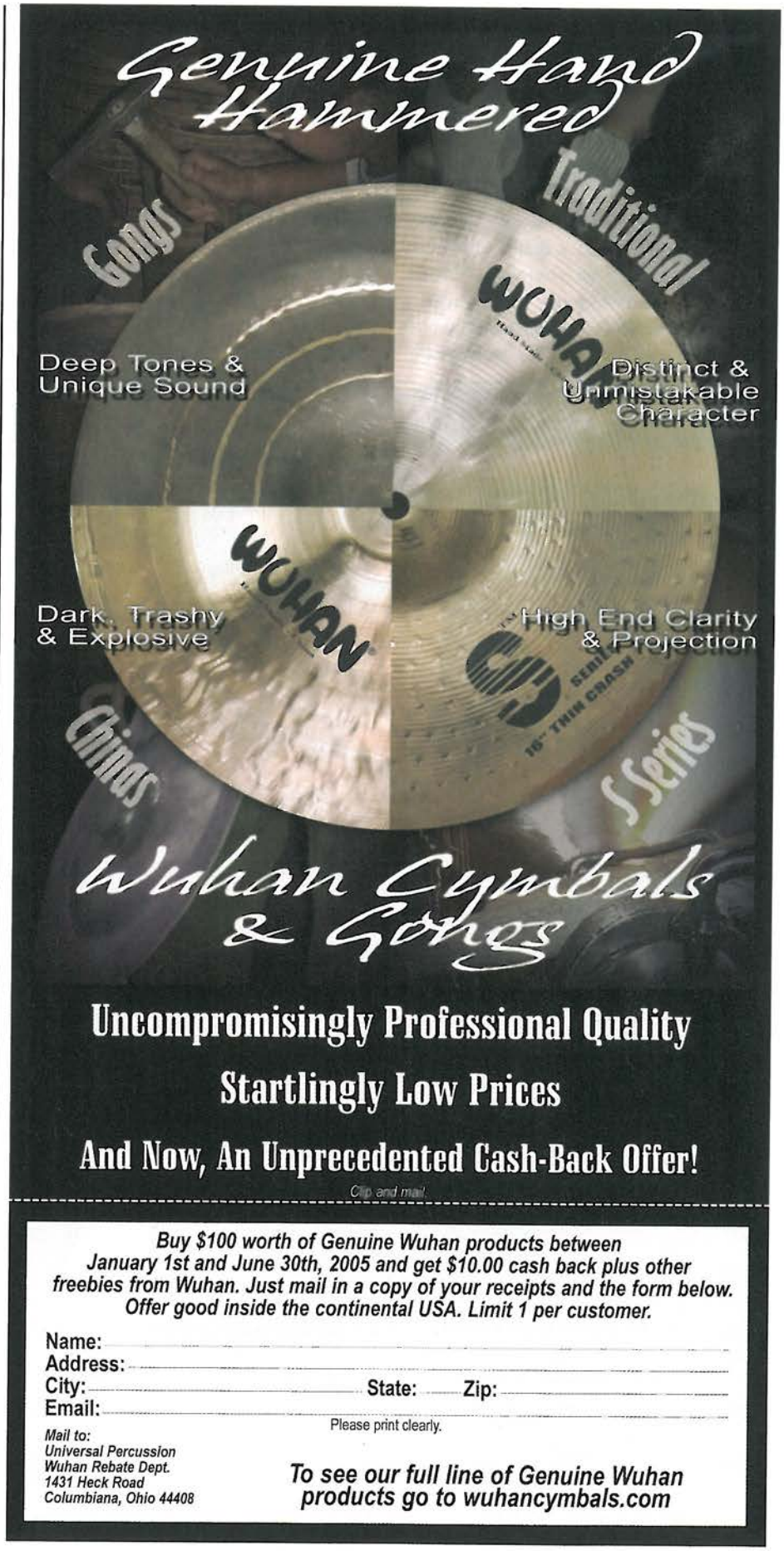
MD: Speaking of creating songs, there's a rhythm that you play on "Shake It," from the new *Running Horse* CD, that sounds exotic. It's played on the toms and the snare, with the snares off. How did you come to create that pattern?

George: Jack Sundrud brought that song in. He played it on guitar, and it was something a little different for us, which I really liked. We played around in the studio, trying to figure out how we wanted to approach the song. I'd done some other work before where I'd turn the snares off, which opens up a whole Latin-ish kind of thing. It gets you into a conga/timbale approach. I also used Hot Rods to play on the set. I listened to Jack's phrasing on the guitar, hit out some patterns with that Latin feel, and it worked.

MD: Poco first recorded in the 1970s, and *Running Horse* was recorded in 2002. The process must seem pretty different today.

George: It does. When we recorded the first Poco albums, we went into the studio, played the music, and laid down the tracks. We were all there together, and there wasn't much overdubbing. They can do a lot these days with computers and engineering. But I still like to work in a group setting.

We approached *Running Horse* with the rhythm section creating a complete track on each song. Then, if we liked the drum track, everything else could be overdubbed on top of it. I don't like looping a



performance. I prefer to do a complete track. If you have to fix something, okay, fix it. But this stuff about looping a few bars of actual playing over and over to create a complete song...I'm not an advocate of that.

MD: How do you prepare to go into the studio? Are you given a demo of a new song to work with on your own before you start laying down initial drum tracks?

George: We actually pre-rehearsed about half of the stuff on the CD, getting the basic parts set. The other half we worked up in the studio, kind of piecing the songs together.

MD: Are there any aspects of your studio performances on *Running Horse* that are hard to duplicate when performing live?

George: You mean hard to do live because there are just the four of us? There is a lot of overdubbing in the studio. We may add a piano, or some percussion. What we try to do is record the basic song live. Then it's easier to pare it down and adapt it for a four-piece group. In the studio, if you're not careful, you're gonna say, "Let's add this, and then let's add that." I go with the mentality that less is more...less is bigger. That's why you should tape the basic song live.

MD: When you play live, you have a digital readout device mounted on your kit. Is it a metronome or click track?

George: No. I don't like playing to a click track, although some of my previous country artist employers liked me to use one. I think that following a click track—at least when playing live—detracts from the freedom to create music.

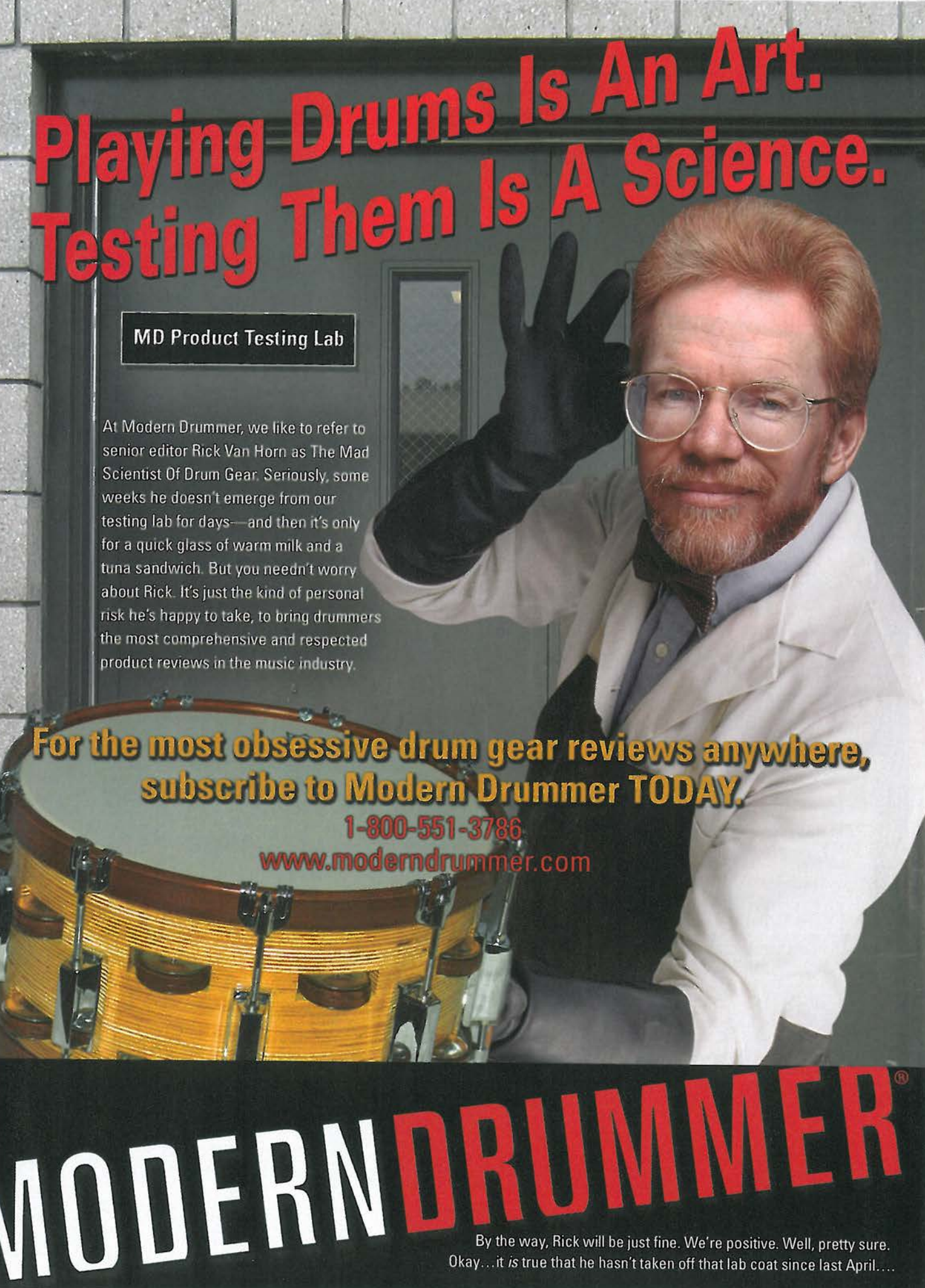
What I'm using is a device called a Groove Guide. It reads the impacts of my sticks on the snare drum, and gives a readout that *monitors* my time, instead of *setting* the time. If I'm speeding up or slowing down, the numbers on the readout change and let me know, and I can adjust. For example, "Call It Love" should be at 106 beats per minute. If the readout shows 102 or 104, I realize that I must be tired, and I need to pick up the tempo a little. If the readout shows 110 or 112, I'm rushing and I need to bring it back.

MD: You spoke of how Buffalo Springfield, and their drummer, Dewey Martin, had a strong influence on you in the early days of your Poco career. What other drummers influenced your style?

George: Steve Gadd is one of my all-time favorites, and I also thought Jeff Porcaro was a wonderful player. And then there's Vinnie Colaiuta, whose mastery of hands, feet, time, feel—just everything—is phenomenal. Vinnie actually did some sessions with Poco for the *Inamorata* album in the 1980s. He's in the credits as "the drummer formerly known as Vince."

MD: Does it strike you that a lot of the hits in today's "pop country" or "crossover country" market feature instrumentation and vocals that are very reminiscent of how Poco played in the late '60s and early '70s?

George: Well, it does seem as though it's all come around again. It's funny how that happens.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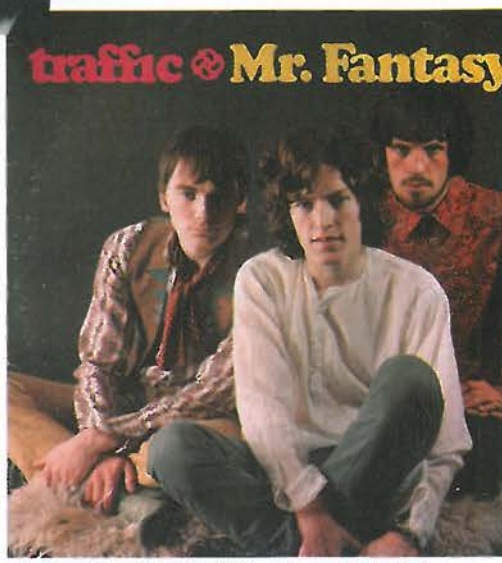
Traffic's *Jim Capaldi*

Jim Capaldi, the drummer with the British band Traffic, died of stomach cancer this past January 28 at the age of sixty.

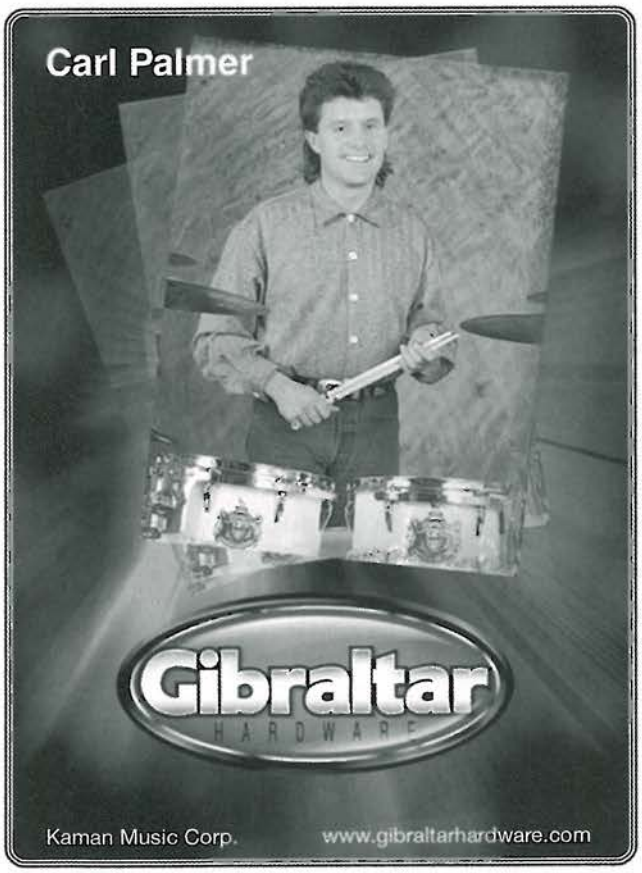
Capaldi was one of the most identifiable and multi-talented musicians to come of age at the tail end of the British Invasion of the mid-'60s. Hooking up with ex–Spencer Davis Group vocalist Steve Winwood, guitarist Dave Mason, and reed player Chris Wood, the drummer helped conceive an unusual band style that encompassed folk, psychedelia, funk, rock, and perhaps most importantly, jazz. Songs like "The Low Spark Of High Heeled Boys," "Glad/Freedom Rider," and "Dear Mr. Fantasy" are utterly unique among the rock canon, and Capaldi was crucial to their successful fusing of rock immediacy and jazz exploration.

Though classic albums like *Mr. Fantasy* and *John Barleycorn Must Die* featured Capaldi's creative and explosive set work, on subsequent Traffic records he would make the rare move out from behind the drums. Ceding the kit to fellow drum geniuses like Jim Gordon, Roger Hawkins, and Walfredo Reyes Jr., Capaldi began to spend more time at the front of the stage, singing songs like the crowd favorites "Rock & Roll Stew" and "Light Up Or Leave Me Alone."

Jim's musical successes were far from over when Traffic broke up in 1974 after the under-appreciated *When The Eagle Flies*. A prolific musician, Capaldi went on to release over a dozen solo discs as a leader, write songs for other bands such as The Eagles' 1996 reunion hit, "Love Will Keep Us Alive," collaborate with heavy friends



Jim Capaldi and Traffic's 1968 coming-out, *Mr. Fantasy*.



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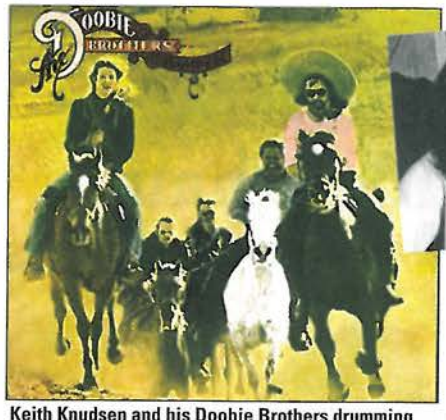
like Bob Marley and Eric Clapton, and win five BMI and ASCAP awards for most-played songs in America. He re-formed Traffic with Winwood in 1993, releasing the reunion album *Far From Home* and touring extensively, including dates with The Grateful Dead and at Woodstock.

When *MD* spoke with Capaldi last February, he was looking forward to coming to the States to be inducted into the Rock 'N' Roll Hall Of Fame with the surviving members of Traffic. (Chris Wood passed away in 1983.) The next few months would see Winwood and Capaldi again discussing a new Traffic project. But soon after, Jim began suffering from the illness that he would eventually succumb to. The last major glimpse rock fans got of the drummer was on the Grammy-winning *Concert For George* DVD, honoring Capaldi's long-time friend George Harrison, who Jim had been working with just prior to the Beatle legend's passing in 2001.

Jim Capaldi is survived by his wife, Aninha, and by his two daughters.

The Doobie Brothers' Keith Knudsen

Keith Knudsen, best known for his work with The Doobie Brothers, died this past February 8, of pneumonia. He was fifty-six. This past January, he was out on the road with The Doobies, doing what he loved to do and had been doing on and off (mostly on) since 1974.



Keith Knudsen and his Doobie Brothers drumming intro, 1975's *Stampede*.

Knudsen, who was born in LeMars, Iowa, began playing the drums in eighth grade. Soon after he joined the junior high school marching band and played sock hops and teen clubs. He fell in love with the blues in high school, and when he moved to San Francisco in 1969, he began playing with The Blind Joe Mendlebaum Blues Band.

In the early '70s, Knudsen teamed with rock organist Lee Michaels, with whom he recorded *Lee Michaels Live*, *Space & First Takes*, and *Nice Day For Something*. In 1973, Keith met up with Doobie Brothers manager Bruce Cohn, who recruited him for the band when Michael Hossack left. He went on the road with the band after only one week's rehearsal.

Keith's first album project with The Doobies was *What Were Once Vices Are Now Habits*, but only as a vocalist. He joined John Hartman on drums for *Stampede*. When Hartman left, the band decided to continue their double-drum

approach and hired Chet McCracken to play alongside Knudsen.

To this day, McCracken recalls how welcoming Knudsen was. "He was so generous with his expertise and time," McCracken says. "I'm sure 90% of *MD* readers understand how highly coveted the drum chair is in a band. He shared it very graciously, and that always impressed me."

Speaking of the classic Doobies hit "Takin' It To The Streets," McCracken comments, "That particular drum track was vintage Keith Knudsen. In my opinion it was the work of genius. As soon as that drum part starts, you know exactly what song it is. That was Keith's baby.

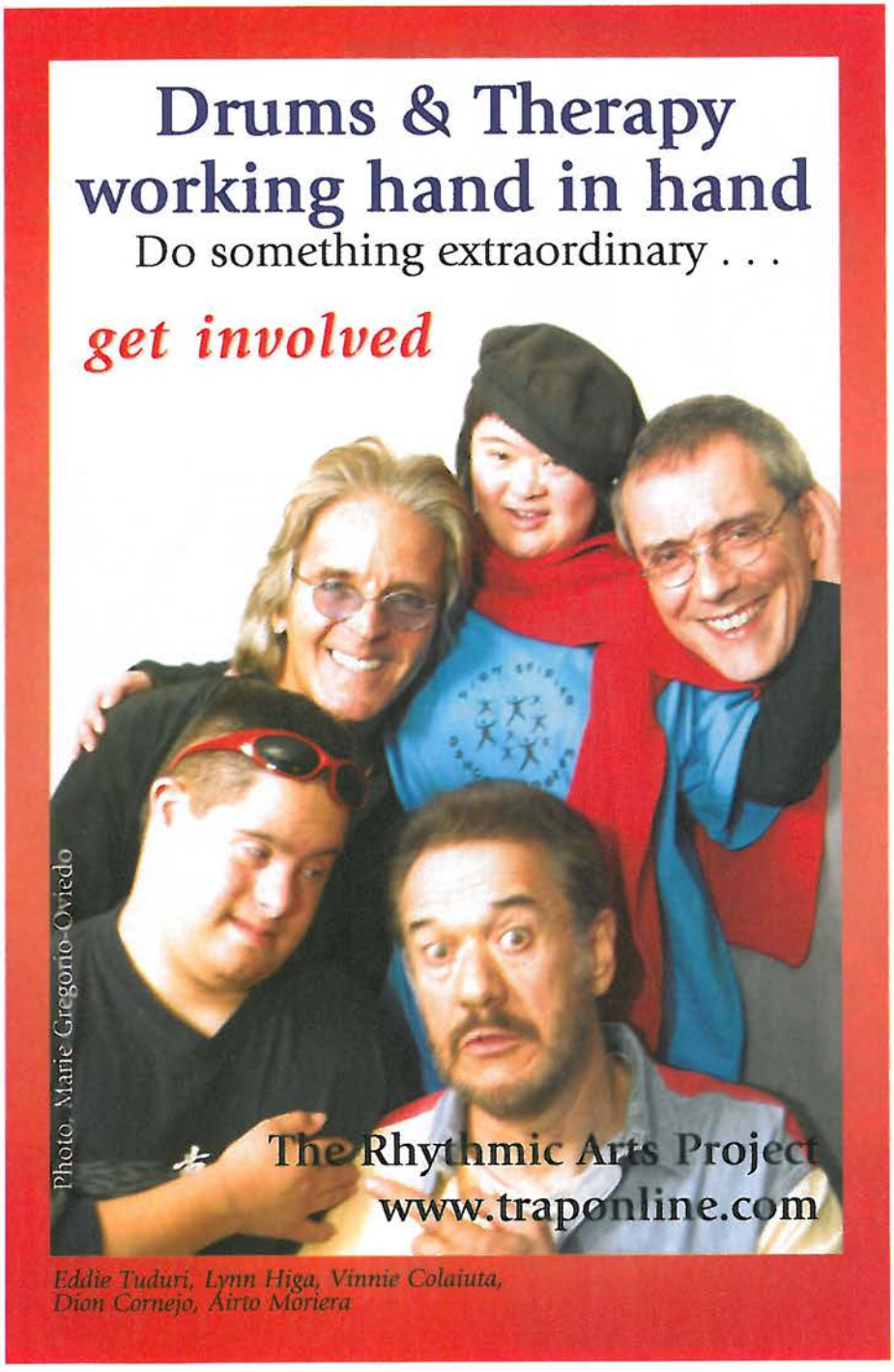
"When we were working on the *One Step Closer* album," McCracken continues, "Keith co-wrote the title song. He came into rehearsal with the song *and* a brilliantly prepared drum part. Keith had a knack for knowing what a song required from the drums, and he never overplayed."

"Keith is a natural drummer," Michael McDonald told *MD* in 2001. "We worked very closely in The Doobies. Keith had a large input on 'Minute By Minute' and 'Takin' It To The Streets.' He came up with the arrangement and the grooves. We cut 'Minute By Minute' with just bassist Tiran Porter, Keith, and me."

After The Doobies' farewell tour in 1982, Knudsen formed Southern Pacific with Doobie pal John McFee. The band released four albums containing some of the greatest country-rock ever recorded. Knudsen re-joined The Doobies in 1993, but two years later was diagnosed with cancer. Although he survived the cancer, it left him weakened.

"Keith Knudsen was a tremendous musician and a great friend," Michael McDonald says. "His personality, kindness, and musical ability were integral to the success of The Doobie Brothers. I'm grateful to have shared so many memories with such a wonderful person and amazing talent."

Doobies founder Tom Johnston adds, "He's going to be missed. We're going to miss him on drums. I'm going to miss him as a buddy."



Eddie Tuduri, Lynn Higa, Vinnie Colaiuta, Dion Cornejo, Airto Moriera

Jefferson Airplane's *Spencer Dryden*

Spencer Dryden, best known as a member of psychedelic rock icons Jefferson Airplane, died Tuesday, January 10 at his home in Petaluma, California, following a battle with colon cancer. He was sixty-six.

Dryden was born in New York City, but moved to Los Angeles with his parents as an infant. After graduating from the Army & Navy Academy in Carlsbad (San Diego County) in 1955, Dryden played in some early rock 'n' roll bands, but showed a preference for jazz. He was drumming at Hollywood's Pink Pussycat strip club when legendary session ace Earl Palmer recommended him to the manager of San Francisco's Jefferson Airplane.

In 1966, Dryden replaced original Airplane drummer Skip Spence (who played on the group's first album, *Jefferson Airplane Takes Off*, then left to form Moby Grape). It was Dryden who powered the Airplane's most famous recordings, including *Surrealistic Pillow*, *After Bathing At Baxter's*, *Bless Its Pointed Little Head*, *Crown Of Creation*, and *Volunteers*. He

also performed with the group at the original Monterey Pop Festival, Woodstock, and Altamont.

Dryden's drumming was a major ingredient of the Airplane's distinctive sound. His rudimental snare drum on "White Rabbit" was a key element to that song's hypnotic effect, and the parts he contributed to songs like "Somebody To Love" and "Volunteers" gave them their intensity and drive.

Long-time Airplane guitarist Jorma Kaukonen says, "The incarnation of the Airplane I liked the best was the one with Spencer, Paul [Kantner, guitarist], Marty [Balin, vocalist], Jack [Casady, bassist], Grace [Slick, vocalist], and myself. We struggled together...occasionally lived together...argued together...and made some great music together."

Dryden left Jefferson Airplane in 1970. In February of 1971 he replaced Mickey Hart in a Grateful Dead side-project called New Riders Of The Purple Sage. From 1971 through 1978 he made several recordings with The New Riders, including their 1973 gold album *The Adventures Of Panama Red*. In the 1980s Dryden joined with former members of Country Joe & The Fish, Big Brother & The Holding Company, and Quicksilver Messenger Service in a psychedelic retro-rock group that unashamedly dubbed itself The Dinosaurs.

Health problems forced Dryden to retire from musical activities in the 1990s. In 1996 he was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall Of Fame for his work with Jefferson Airplane during the band's glory years, but was unable to perform with the group at the celebratory event. In September of 2003, he lost his Petaluma home and all his personal possessions in a fire. In 2004, The Dead's Bob Weir and Gov't Mule's Warren Haynes played a San Francisco benefit for Dryden that generated $36,000 for hip replacements and pending heart surgery. Late last year Dryden attended a DVD release party for Jefferson Airplane at the Great American Musical Hall in San Francisco. It proved to be his final public appearance.

Spencer Dryden and The Jefferson Airplane's 1967 classic, *Surrealistic Pillow*.

"Spencer had a flow," says Mickey Hart of The Dead. "[He had] a way of going, an impulse power that was irresistible and unique. He was capable of creating a churning, loving rhythm machine for ecstatic dancing."

To hear classic tracks from Jim Capaldi, Keith Knudsen, and Spencer Dryden, tune in to MD Radio at www.moderndrummer.com.

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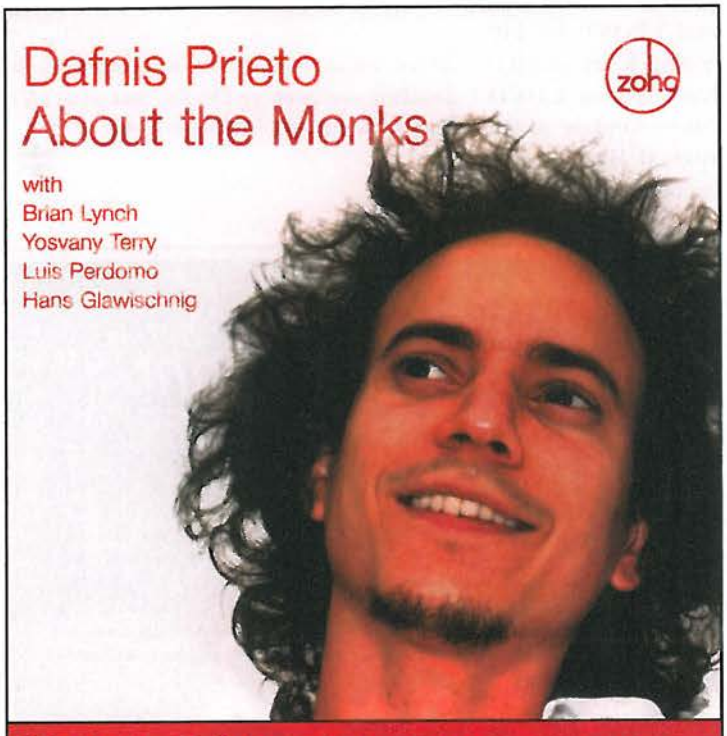

Dafnis Prieto About The Monks (Zoho)

Dafnis Prieto is an exciting talent following in the footsteps of masters of independence like Walfredo Reyes Sr. and Horacio Hernandez, as well as fusion aces like Dave Weckl and Dennis Chambers. Born in Cuba but living in New York since 2002, Prieto has a coming-out with *About The Monks*, showing off his chops as a songwriter and leader as well as traps man. Throughout, Dafnis presents buoyant, uplifting playing on crisp musical ideas. On "Ironico Arlequin," which has the taste of Chick Corea's "Leprechaun," the drummer comes across as a slightly more light-handed version of Steve Gadd, and on "Trio Absolute" he gets after some serious funk. "Danzon Santa Clara" is an elegant eight minutes of tempo changes featuring a brisk, light, Metheny-esque section that slows into some lovely drum and cymbal orchestration. A montuno ensues, and Prieto delivers an articulate, breathtaking solo. **Robin Tolleson**

Billy Cobham's Culture Mix

Colours (In & Out)

Mixing muscle with funky finesse, **BILLY COBHAM** leads his quintet through a set that also includes splashes of Caribbean, Brazilian, and jazz grooves. Alternating in recent years between acoustic and electric projects, the godfather of fusion drumming finds a satisfying balance in Culture Mix. **Wilbert Junior Gill**'s elegant steel pan playing lends a refreshing contrast to the electric rhythm section of **Stefan Rademacher** (bass), **Per Gade** (guitar), and **Marcos Ubeda** (keyboards). Cobham is mighty mighty with his tight, cracking, ghost-noted grooves and signature breathtaking tom fills. It's a locked-in, upbeat sound. (www.billycobham.com) **Jeff Potter**

And You Will Know Us By The Trail Of Dead Worlds Apart (Interscope)

And You Will Know Us By The Trail Of Dead's musical outlook has always been on the progressive end of indie rock. The band's latest, *Worlds Apart*, finds the act pushing those boundaries a bit further. Drummer **JASON REECE**, abetted by percussionist **DONI SCHROADER**, takes command of the album's highlights with his choppy, simple rudiments on "The Rest Will Follow," the punctuated 7/4 thrust of "A Classic Arts Showcase" (which includes a stirring breakdown of 16th-note runs), and the calculated performance of "All White." *Worlds Apart* provides a sense of musical exploration on each song, making it an album that's well worth investigating. **Waleed Rashidi**

Marco Minnemann

Mieze (independent)

Let's call this "sophisticated modern European melodic pop music." Across this drum champ's solo disc, catchy melodies and relationship-based lyrics are layered over interesting musical harmonies and sometimes complex/sometimes simple rhythmic backdrops. Marco wrote the music, produced the recording, and, impressively, played all instruments. He also debuts his friendly, relaxed vocal talents. And when the drummer decides to cut loose on the skins, it's mind boggling. Still, that's not the focus of this collection. Here, Marco proves that his résumé can claim way more than Drum God, and includes well-rounded composer, exceptionally talented producer, and accomplished multi-instrumentalist. (www.marcominnemann.com) **Mike Haid**

Judas Priest Angel Of Retribution (Epic)

There's order in the universe after all: **Rob Halford** has been restored to his rightful position atop the metal mountain that is Judas Priest. In fact, Halford's in fine voice, and seems to have inspired a second honeymoon; *Angel* is far better than it needs to be as a tour-justifying reunion vehicle. **SCOTT TRAVIS** literally kicks songs like "Demonizer" into shape with even-footed double bass strokes. His tom-based beat propels "Revolution," and he makes his few big fills count. Only time will tell whether this is an essential Priest album. But the leather-and-stud guys from Birmingham are back with a vengeance, still writing some of the best songs in hard rock. **Michael Parillo**

Garbage Bleed Like Me (Geffen)

Just when they seemed destined for the rock dustbin of history, Madison's finest kicks it hard and high with the most guitar-heavy, rhythm shrapnel-inducing album of their seven-year career. As manic guitars peel through the album like an alien giving birth, drummers **DAVE GROHL** (on opener "Bad Boyfriend") and **MATT WALKER** revel in the kind of one-two punch and power that Garbage drummer **BUTCH VIG**, great as he is, could never have mustered. Grohl is consummately sweaty, and Walker's spectacular clarity and drive make Garbage's melody-rich songs a spectacle worth paying for. **Ken Micallef**

Joji Hirota Japanese Taiko (Arcmusic)

JOJI HIROTA and his Japanese taiko drum ensemble have put together a powerful new CD of original compositions. The tunes cover everything from harvest festivals, to shooting stars, to the Copernican theory of planetary revolution (!) The first four tracks explode and segue, leaving you with little time to catch your breath. There is quite a variety in sound, shape, and size of the drums featured here, and musical highlights are everywhere. "Heartbeat" moves into the Japanese "ji" rhythm, which is believed to be the sound of Mother Nature; its galloping tone really moves forward. But the best is saved for last: "Y Uki Ji Zoh (An Old Tale)" is a gorgeous, meditative combination of high bells and extreme low drums.

David Licht

The Mother's Anger

The Mother's Anger (Dionysus)

Listening to this boisterous Israeli duo is like downing a potent, melodic sound cake baked with bits of sweetness and spice to inflame the soul. Guitarist/vocalist **David Stitch** rips anguished, expletive-laced Cobain-esque vocal lines, as drummer **JIMI NOSTALGIA** (Ilan Shtarkman) shapes this uncluttered but noisy musical landscape with his trashy thrashing. (Check out "Down.") Subtle they ain't, but don't mistake their aggressiveness for lack of craft. In "Memories," for example, Nostalgia lays down a simple and effective snare/accented hi-hat groove. Detractors may call the group a Nirvana clone, but their infectious songs forgive any musical transgressions.

Will Romano

American Hi-Fi

Hearts On Parade (Maverick)

What to do when your successful rock band is drummerless and you've got an album to track? Well, if your act's front man doubles as a capable drummer, as does **STACY JONES** of American Hi-Fi, throw him the throne and roll tape. Jones, who in fact launched his career drumming in Letters To Cleo and Veruca Salt, executes a well-rounded set on *Hearts On Parade*. Highlights include the dirty disco of "We Can't Be Friends," the Clash-esque "Highs And Lows," and the robust backbeat of "Hell Yeah." Though original drummer Brian Nolan's fiery stickwork will be missed (the band's self-titled debut features some serious slamming), Jones has competently maintained the band's lively pace.

Waleed Rashidi

Simon & Garfunkel

Old Friends: Live In Concert (Warner Bros.)

Touring a set of well-worn classics is tricky. Audiences yearn to embrace the familiar, but they don't want mold. For a fresh dusting-off, call the youthful Mr. **JIM KELTNER**. On this live double-disc, Mr. K pays homage to the original drum parts with subtle variations that pepper things up, and his unparalleled backbeat placement makes several uptempo oldies rock harder. Old friends Simon and Garfunkel are in fine form, and the heart remains. A crack band of "cats" includes percussionist **JAMEY HADDAD** lending an uplifting, tasteful complement to Keltner. Thanks to this rhythm duo, it's a lively reunion, and everything's "feelin' groovy."

Jeff Potter

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The Apex Theory

Inthatskyissomethingwatching (independent)

The murky sonic wisps opening this 23-minute, seven-track EP belies the big sound soon to be unleashed. The precise and winding rhythms spun by drummer **SAMMY J. WATSON** cut their own twisted trajectory. Watson often plays steady quarter-note hi-hat beats while clusters of syncopated kick, tom, and snare patterns threaten to tip the entire frayed rhythm over the edge. In "Mirrors," the drummer shadows **Artin Karamian**'s guitar runs and **David Hakopyan**'s bass lines with a 6/8 kick pattern and a steady 4/4 beat on top. The combination of solid musical interplay, the fusion of emo, grunge, and punk, and the set's sheer ferocity makes this exceptional brand of progressive metal rhythmically explosive. **Will Romano**

Jeff Parker The Relatives (Thrill Jockey)

Windy City guitarist Jeff Parker comes from a scene (Tortoise, Chicago Underground) that isn't overly concerned with genre boundaries. That helps explain why the closest thing to straight-ahead jazz on his second LP is a swinging reading of a Marvin Gaye song. **CHAD TAYLOR**'s unerringly tasty patterns are enriched by gorgeous, intimate production that practically lets you smell the wood of his drums. Taylor crafts hypnotic beats, drawing from swing, boogaloo, Latin jazz, and his own imagination. And he gets to blow a little—albeit quietly—over "Rang." Like the album itself, he's heavy without being loud, with a sense of drama and fun. **Michael Parillo**

Anthrax

The Greater Of Two Evils (Sanctuary)

Does anyone play heavy speed metal better than **CHARLIE BENANTE**? On this collection of Anthrax classics picked in a contest by the band's fans, then re-recorded live last year, Benante shows he's as quick afoot as ever—and the band hasn't lost steam either. "Tight" is the word. Kick flourishes punctuate "Deathriders," building and accenting the action. "Caught In A Mosh" features some blast-furnace fills, and the grand intro to "A.I.R." is followed by a frantic instrumental section with Benante double-timing at breakneck speed. The drummer never plays it safe; he can afford to go out on a limb because his hands and feet are solidly in time. **Robin Tolleson**

Of Further Interest

TONY PALERMO and No Doubt's **ADRIAN YOUNG** share drum duties on Unwritten Law's latest, *Here's To The Mourning*. Modern pop with endless hooks and now sounds. (Lava)

DANNY GOTTLIEB, noted for his tenures with Pat Metheny, Gil Evans, and John McLaughlin, works it on master bassist Jeff Berlin's *Lumpy Jazz*. (www.jeffberlinmusic.com)

BILL BRUFORD and Dutch pianist Michiel Borstlap's *In Concert In Holland* DVD includes an hour of concert footage and a half hour of backstage clips. A limited edition of 2,000, with a bonus audio CD. (www.voiceprint.co.uk) Bruford's two albums with noted keyboardist Patrick Moraz, *Flags* and *Music For Piano & Drums*, have been reissued on CD via Bill's Winterfold label. (www.voiceprint.co.uk)

Recorded at New York's Roseland Ballroom in December 2002, Dio's *Evil Or Divine* is the audio companion to last year's DVD. **SIMON WRIGHT** is on drums. (Eagle Vision)

DVDs

Branford Marsalis Quartet

Performs Coltrane's A Love Supreme (Marsalis Music)

level: all, $19.98

Recorded live at Bimhuis, Amsterdam in 2003, this DVD documents a band at the zenith of their powers. Though the notion of covering as important an album as *A Love Supreme* may seem like an over-ambitious, even egotistical goal, saxist Marsalis, drummer **JEFF "TAIN" WATTS**, bassist **Eric Revis**, and pianist **Joey Calderazzo** make it their own. Tain only hints at Elvin's literal patterns, preferring to make the Latin and straight-ahead rhythms more fluid, even breaking into fusion terrain at times. His solo midway through is excellent—an inspired, incredibly crafted display that is beautifully logical, perfectly paced, and pressurized as only Tain can make it. **Ken Micallef**

Advanced Funk Studies 25th Anniversary Edition by Rick Latham (Carl Fischer)

level: intermediate to advanced, $34.95

Hard to believe it's been twenty-five years since Rick Latham released his groundbreaking instructional focusing on the techniques and concepts of the great funk/fusion drummers of the '70s and '80s, namely Steve Gadd, David Garibaldi, and Harvey Mason. *Studies* was the first book of its kind to unlock the mysteries of the great technical players of the era, and it remains a staple in the instructional catalog. This three-hour DVD features the original full-length VHS versions of Latham's *Advanced Funk Studies* video and his follow-up, *Contemporary Drumset Techniques*. Latham concisely explains and performs examples from the books and puts them to work with his funky fusion band. The quality of the original VHS productions and the educational value of these timeless techniques still stand as strong accomplishments. New footage includes Latham discussing the impact of his books with drum legends Louie Bellson and Ed Shaughnessy. Anyone interested in rudimental and linear-style funk and fusion drumming would be well served to start here. **Mike Haid**

Trust Your Ears: The Drum Tech Explorations Of Jeff Ocheltree (Rittor/Hal Leonard)

level: all, $19.95

Jeff Ocheltree has virtually written the book on drum teching since the late 1960s. This is a heartfelt, if rough-around-the-edges, look at his career and concepts on tuning and "hanging." Actually, there's a lot of hanging in this video, but there are also some awesome moments, like hearing Jeff rattle off the particulars of John Bonham's kit, including cymbals, heads, mic's, and tuning concepts. Bonzo's drums were "like big drums in the big band era," Jeff reveals, "tuned *up*." Ocheltree goes on to reveal that the bottom heads were significantly tighter than the tops. Revelations like these get us closer to knowing what gave Billy Cobham his focus and projection, what made Lenny White's low toms sing, and what made Bonham...Bonham. Ocheltree turns drum tuning into an art form, ditching the age-old prescriptions, relying on his ears and feel, and encouraging us to do the same, with tangible results. **Robin Tolleson**

Primus Hallucino-Genetics Live 2004 (Frizzle Fry)

level: all, $14.98

This mighty power trio may produce exciting records that appease a healthy underground fan base, but this live DVD (Chicago, 2004) suffers from weak sound, minimal camera angles, and a plodding groove that is barely rescued by drummer **TIM ALEXANDER**. Tim has a plethora of chops, but here he's usually playing second banana to **Les Claypool**'s monotonous bass riffing and endless solos. The songs tend to sound the same, as do the tempos. By the time Tim solos in the complete rendition of their album *Frizzle Fry*, even *he* seems bored. **Ken Micallef**

To hear many of the artists reviewed in this month's *Critique*, be sure to tune in to www.moderndrummer.com.

BOOKS

Ultimate Play-Along, Carmine Appice: Guitar Zeus Drum Trax

by Rick Gratton and Carmine Appice (Warner Bros.)

level: intermediate to advanced, $24.95 (with CD)

This is a collection of seven hard rockin' tunes co-written by drum legend Carmine Appice (Vanilla Fudge, Rod Stewart). The well-designed, 73-page book offers Carmine's accurately transcribed drumming performances and abbreviated play-along charts, along with analysis from Carmine on how he created the parts, plus a transcribed breakdown of each section and standout fills. The *Guitar Zeus* play-along CD features several big-name guitarists, including **Ted Nugent**, **Neal Schon**, **Zakk Wylde**, **Yngwie Malmsteen**, and **Paul Gilbert**, and it includes Carmine's solid performances and music-minus-drums play-along tracks of all seven tunes. Because several cuts feature odd-meter phrases and advanced fill ideas, this book is a little complicated for beginners. But it's well suited for the intermediate to advanced rocker looking to sharpen reading skills and strengthen grooves. And getting to play along with some of the world's greatest rock guitarists is certainly a buzz. **Mike Haid**

My First Snare Drum For The Developing Student

by Seth Goldberg (Carl Fischer)

level: beginner, $6.95

My First Snare Drum is not your ordinary beginning drum book. Author Goldberg starts out with the basics like whole, half, and quarter notes and rests, then immediately throws in solos as well as some pretty fun warm-ups like "The Eight-Note Bop" and "The Dotted-Note Circus." This tactic might seem a little premature to some, but with a good teacher, the early addition of accents and dotted notes should be a nice and doable challenge for a new drummer. Everything from flams, rolls, and understanding dynamics to duets and all the rudiments are covered in this easy-to-read 32-pager. Some other nice additions are tempo markings, which give the student a good starting point, as well as lessons that work on hand muscle memory. I know there are a ton of beginner snare drum books on the market. So...why not one more, especially one that's this much fun. **Fran Azzarto**

Taking The Reins

New drummer-led releases on CD

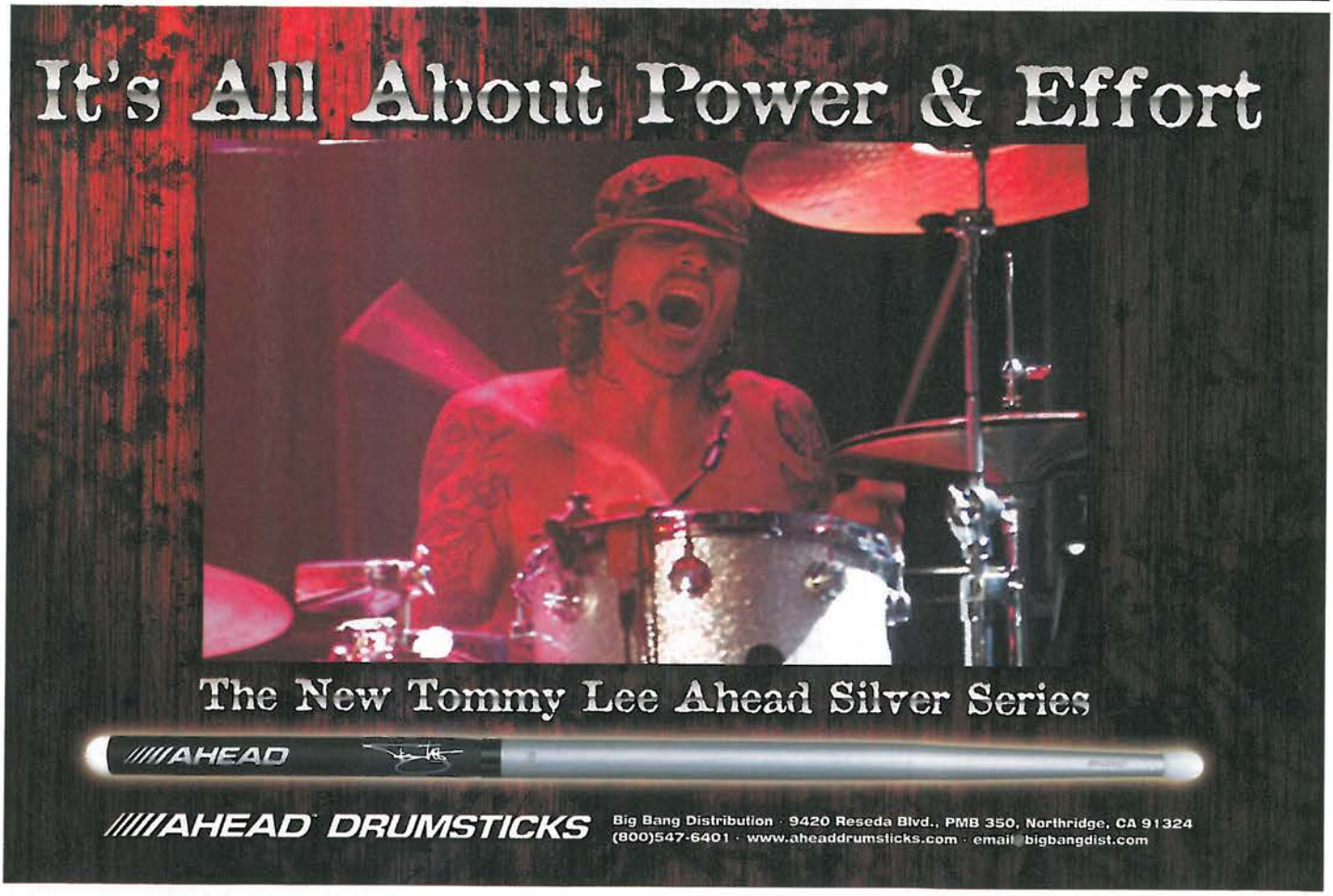
Andrea Marcelli, *Beyond The Blue*, www.andreamarcelli.com

Chembo, *Portrait In Rhythms*, www.chembocorniel.com

Barry Romberg's Random Access, *Part 3*, www.barryromberg.com

Roberto Sallaberry, *SambaSong & Friends*, www.sallaberry.com.br

Mat Marucci & Markus Burger, *Genesis*, www.geocities.com/matmarucci



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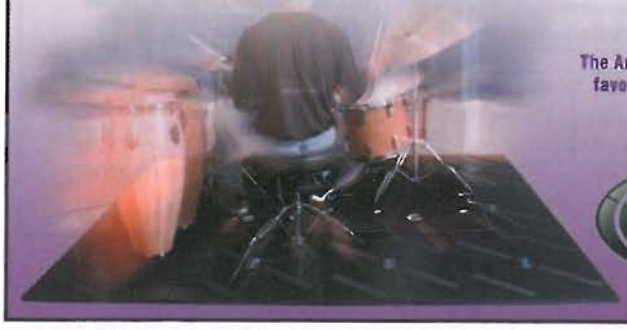

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NAMM Events Report

The Winter National Association of Music Merchants trade show in Anaheim, California historically features some great live performances for show-goers to check out after the convention floor closes each evening. Here's a look at some of the cool events that took place during this year's NAMM show.

Sabian Live

Roy Burns (foreground) and Sabian's Robert Zildjian

Vic Firth

Sabian's after-show event is always a hot ticket. This year's "Sabian Live" presentation, held on Friday, January 21, was no exception.

The evening opened with lifetime achievement award presentations to **Vic Firth** and **Roy Burns**—described by Sabian as "two men who have changed the face of drumming and percussion forever." The awards were followed by a rare performance by **Billy Cobham**, accompanied by bassist Victor Bailey, guitarist Frank Gambale, and keyboardist Tom Coster. Funky grooves and blazing fills were the order of the day, along with the power and intensity that Billy has always personified.

Studio and touring great **Steve Ferrone** appeared with his new part-time band, which includes vocalist Alex Ligertwood (Santana), saxophonist Brandon Fields (Dave Weckl Band), and bassist Robert DeLeo and guitarist Dean DeLeo (Stone Temple Pilots). The eleven-piece unit smoked on AWB hits "Schoolboy Crush" and "Cut The Cake," then segued into the Stone Temple Pilots' "Plush." Guest spots from Keb Mo and keyboard legend Brian Auger added musical spice.

The evening closed with LA drummer **Ray Luzier** and guitarist Toshi Hiketa (both of Hideous Sun Demons), in a trio with über-bassist Billy Sheehan. Ray's blazing chops and crowd-pleasing showmanship, combined with Billy's virtuoso basswork, led to ferocious performances of tunes like Jeff Beck's "Led Boots" and Deep Purple's "Burn."

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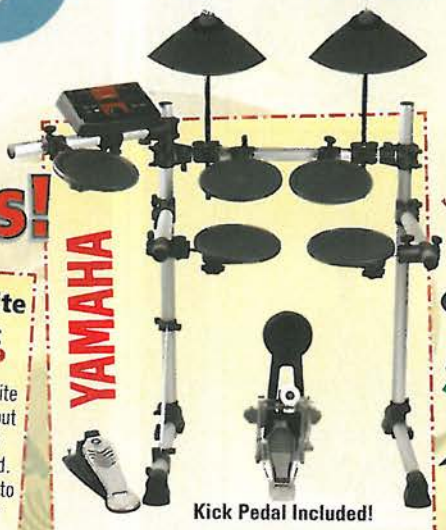

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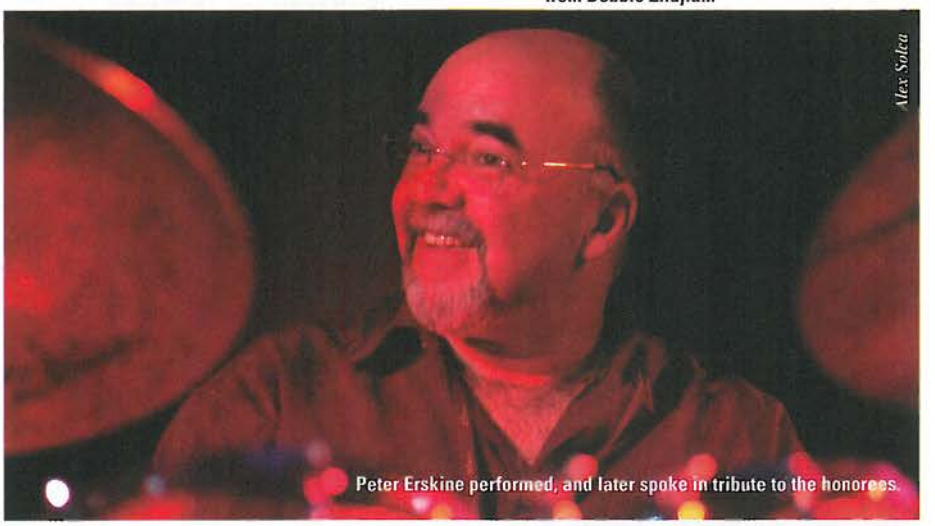
Zildjian Party For Louie, Roy, And Earl

The birthday boys (from left): Earl Palmer, Roy Haynes, and Louie Bellson

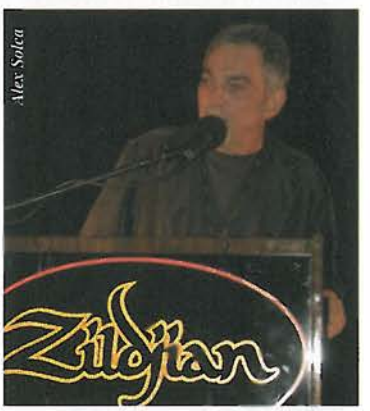
Louie receives a lifetime achievement award from Debbie Zildjian.



Peter Erskine performed, and later spoke in tribute to the honorees.

On Saturday, January 22, Zildjian hosted a party honoring drumming icons **Louie Bellson** and **Earl Palmer** (who both turned eighty last year) and **Roy Haynes** (who turned eighty this past March). Personal congratulations were offered to all three gentlemen by dozens of drummers and industry personalities in attendance. Musical entertainment was provided by **Peter Erskine** & The Lounge Art Ensemble, featuring saxophonist Bob Sheppard and bassist Dave Carpenter.

The official program began with an introduction by Zildjian CEO **Craigie Zildjian**. LA musicians union president Hal Espinoza then presented the honorees with lifetime achievement awards. This was followed by onstage tributes from **Remo Belli** and **Lloyd McCausland** (Remo, Inc.) and **Joe Testa** (Yamaha), along with Zildjian artists **Steve Gadd**, **Steve Smith**, and **Peter Erskine**. Noted teacher **Freddie Gruber** entertained the audience with stories about the three drum greats, and Louie Bellson's wife, Francine, spoke in honor of her legendary husband. The three "birthday boys" then expressed their gratitude for the recognition bestowed upon them by their peers and fans.



The two Steves—Gadd and Smith—added their words of praise.

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Sunday Clinics

Joel Spencer (independent)
courtesy of Premier, Steve Maxwell Drums, Regal Tip and Aquarian

Dick Schory (former Director of Marketing, Ludwig Drum Co.)
courtesy of Rebeats

Todd Sucherman (Styx)
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Yamaha Artist Gathering

In what was billed as "The ultimate rhythm section," Yamaha drum artists gathered for an autograph session at Winter NAMM 2005. Participants included Roy Haynes, Earl Palmer, Jimmy Chamberlin, Dave Weckl, Steve Gadd, Peter Erskine, Alex Acuña, "J.R." Robinson, Billy Cobham, Kirk Covington, Gerry Brown, Ndugu Chancler, and many more.

World's Fastest Drummer Competition

WFD "fastest hands" winner Chaz Stanbach (with belt)

"Fastest feet" winner Matt Garrett

The third annual NAMM/World's Fastest Drummer competition culminated in finals on Sunday, January 23. A courtyard full of drummers tried to overthrow WFD champions **Mike Mangini** (who set a new fastest hands record of more than 1,200 beats in one minute, as measured on a Drumometer) and **Tim Waterson** (recordholder for fastest feet). Other WFD stalwarts **Art Verdi**, **Jotan Afanador**, and **Johnny Rabb** were on hand to provide lessons and demonstrations.

Mike Mangini broke the 1,200-beat mark (in sixty seconds) to set a new world's record.

Although he didn't beat Mangini's new record, **Chaz Stanbach** of North Hollywood, California scored an impressive 924 on the Drumometer to win for fastest hands. **Matt Garrett** of Glendale, California stomped out 888 beats to take the award for fastest feet. The two winners split $12,000 in prizes from Axis, Meinl, Pearl, Pro-Mark, and Remo, Warner Bros., Drumometer, and Timbyrwood & Laser. More information can be obtained at www.worldsfastestdrummer.com.

Story and photos by T. Bruce Wittet

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6. DEREK GRANT (Alkaline Trio)
7. JOSH EPPARD (Coheed & Cambria)

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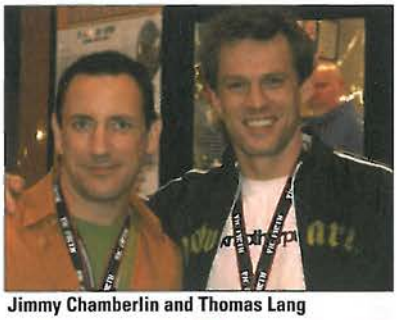
Faces At NAMM

The NAMM show always attracts dozens of top drummers. Some were there to do autograph signings or performance demos at drum- and cymbal-company exhibits. But many others discovered that the *Modern Drummer* booth was *the* place to hang.

Photos by Alex Solca and Philippe Mathys



Jimmy Chamberlin and Thomas Lang

Jim Keltner

Jack Irons

Ndugu Chancler, Mike Mangini, and Charles Collins

German up & comer Benny Greb, Rikki Rockett, Thomas Lang, and Steve Ferrone

Kevin Frank and Jason Bittner

Doane Perry, Troy Luccketta, and Chuck Morris

Bobby Rondinelli, Matt Frenetic, and Billy "Thunder" Mason

TOMMY IGOE'S

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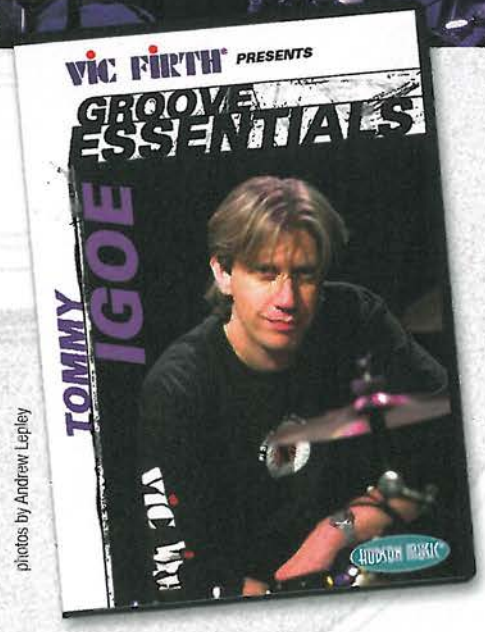

photos by Andrew Lepley

Based on the *Groove Essentials* poster created by Tommy Igoe and Vic Firth, this DVD presents 47 essential grooves from Rock, Jazz and R&B/Funk to World/Ethnic music. Drum artist, teacher and author Tommy Igoe demonstrates each pattern at the drums and also with a rhythm track featuring some of NY's top musicians. Mastering these patterns will greatly expand your knowledge while allowing you to become a more well-rounded player with the confidence to perform in virtually any musical situation.

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- Tommy thoroughly explains each groove breaking each down to it's basic elements and performing each one with and without a live band rhythm track at two different tempos.
- As a special bonus a **free Groove Essentials poster** (courtesy of Vic Firth drum sticks), is included, containing fully-notated examples of each groove.

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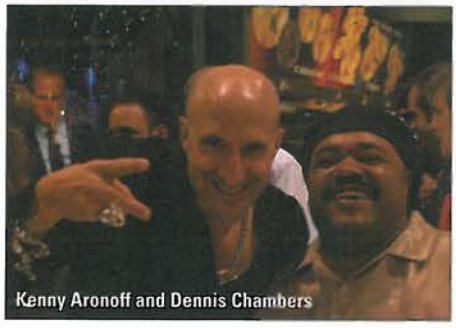
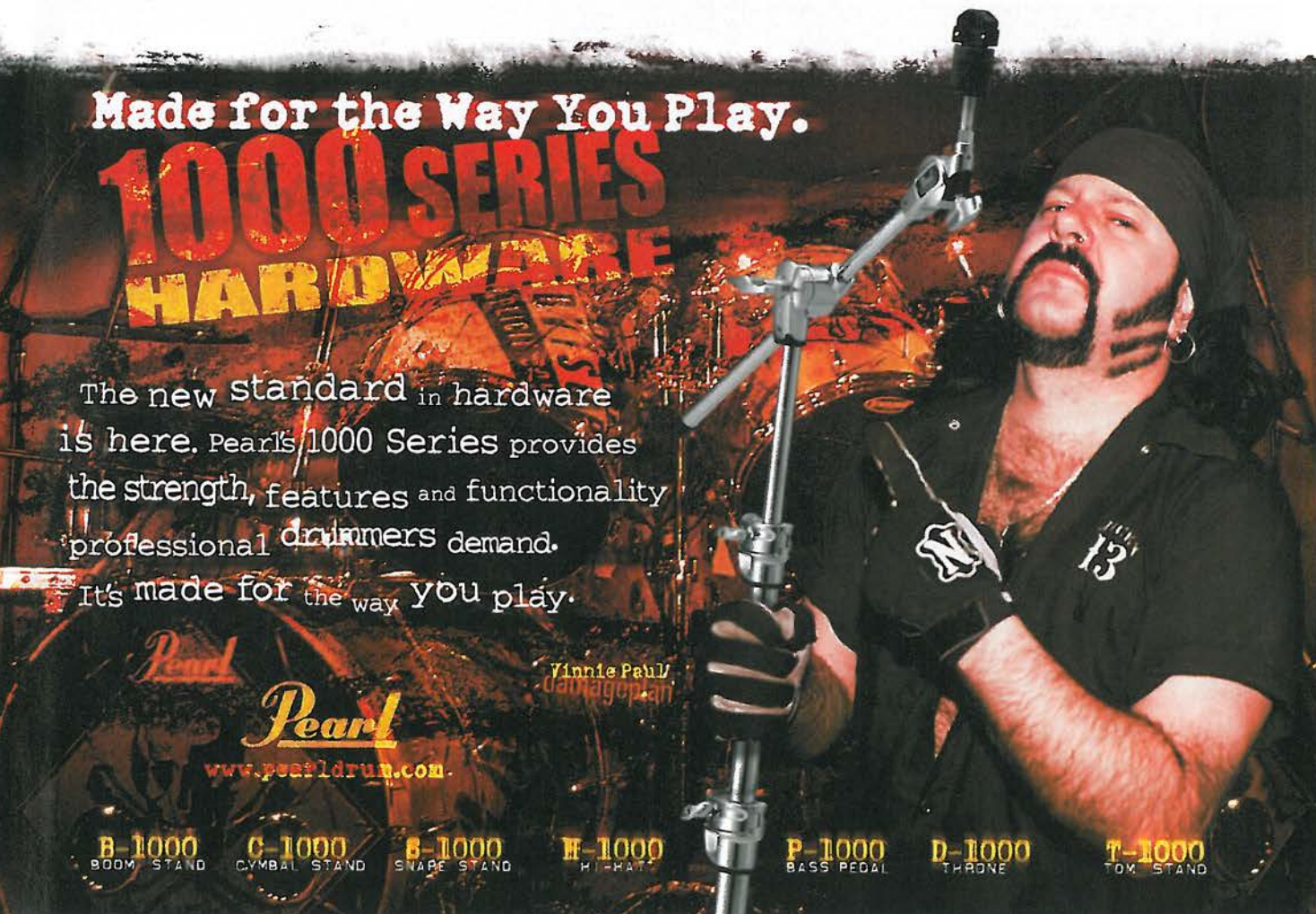

Kenny Aronoff and Dennis Chambers

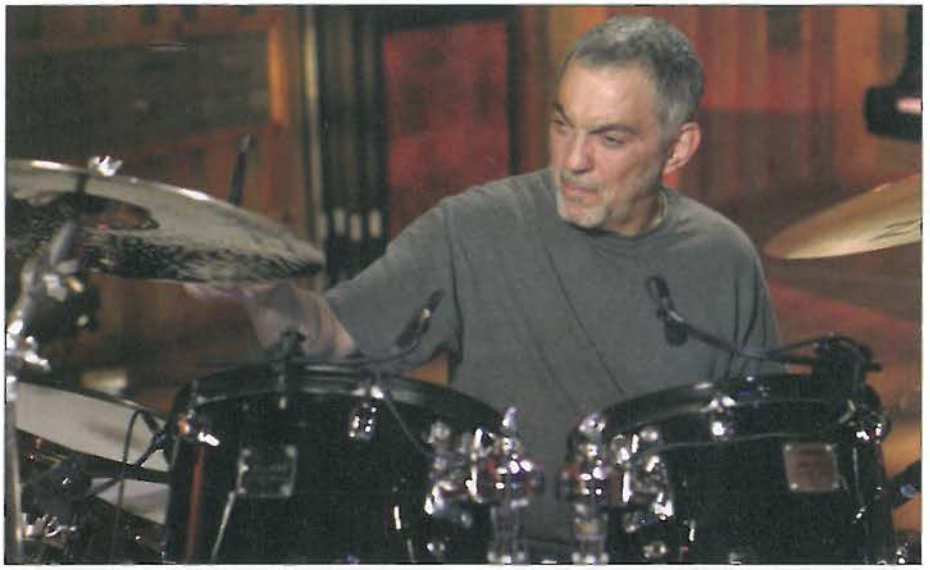
Peter Erskine, Steve Gadd, Zildjian's John DeChristopher, and Billy Ward



On A Mission From Gadd

The Legendary Drummer Returns To The Clinic Trail

After a nearly twenty-year absence from performing clinics, drum legend Steve Gadd is hitting the road once again. Traveling in the 2005 Zildjian US Clinic Tour bus, the "We're On A Mission From Gadd" tour will present Steve in clinics and performances throughout the Southwest and Midwest. The tour, which began Monday, April 4 in San Antonio, Texas, will finish Sunday, April 17 at Columbus Pro Percussion's "Drum Daze" in Columbus, Ohio.



According to Zildjian, Steve's performance in each location will be the grand finale to a day-long Zildjian event. Each event will also feature presentations by Zildjian product specialists, who will be accompanying Steve with a collection of Zildjian favorites and special Zildjian Sound Lab prototype cymbals. Throughout the day, Zildjian team members, along with Steve, will be available to answer individual questions and help with cymbal selection. Steve's clinic will be held in the evening at a separate venue in order to accommodate as many attendees as possible.

According to John DeChristopher, Zildjian director of artist relations & event marketing worldwide, "This twelve-city tour will be the first of its kind for Zildjian. Steve Gadd is without a doubt our most requested artist for clinics, and we're excited to make him available to musicians around the country." For more information visit www.zildjian.com.

Academy Of Drums Drum Fest

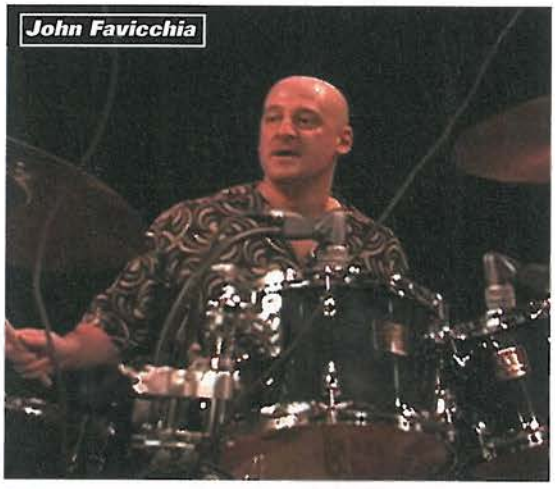
New Jersey's Academy Of Drums staged its sixth annual Drum Fest this past January 9, at Ocean County College in Toms River, New Jersey. The day-long event drew over four hundred fifty avid drumming enthusiasts.

The show opened with Academy teachers **Bryan Brosen**, **Charlie Wiedemer**, and **Ryan Carver** alternating between two different drumkits and a multi-percussion setup. New York jazz drummer **John Favicchia** was next up, with his band Dharma. John displayed the versatility and virtuosity that have made him a first-call player for the likes of Steve Khan, Larry Coryell, and a host of other jazz stars.

MD senior editor **Rick Van Horn** presented a clinic that focused on drumset ergonomics, the elements of groove, and making musical choices to create a drum part for any given tune. He played with several tracks to illustrate his points. Academy Of Drums founder (and Drum Fest producer) **Neil Garthly** then thrilled the crowd with a performance on his multiple-pedal "twenty-first century drumkit," playing a snare drum, a ride cymbal, and various percussion items with his feet.

The irrepressible **Dom Famularo** closed the show by talking about the connection between drumming and personal expression, followed by a solo drum performance that reflected his intensity. All of the day's performers (and some last-minute guests, including Symphony X's **Jason Rullo**) then came back on stage for a rousing finale.

Dom Famularo


John Favicchia

Neil Garthly

Support for the event was provided by Sabian, Remo, Vic Firth, LP, Audix, and *Modern Drummer*. For more information, go to www.academyofdrums.com.

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-H.E.A.R. Founding Donor, Musician Pete Townshend Rolling Stone Magazine July, 1989.

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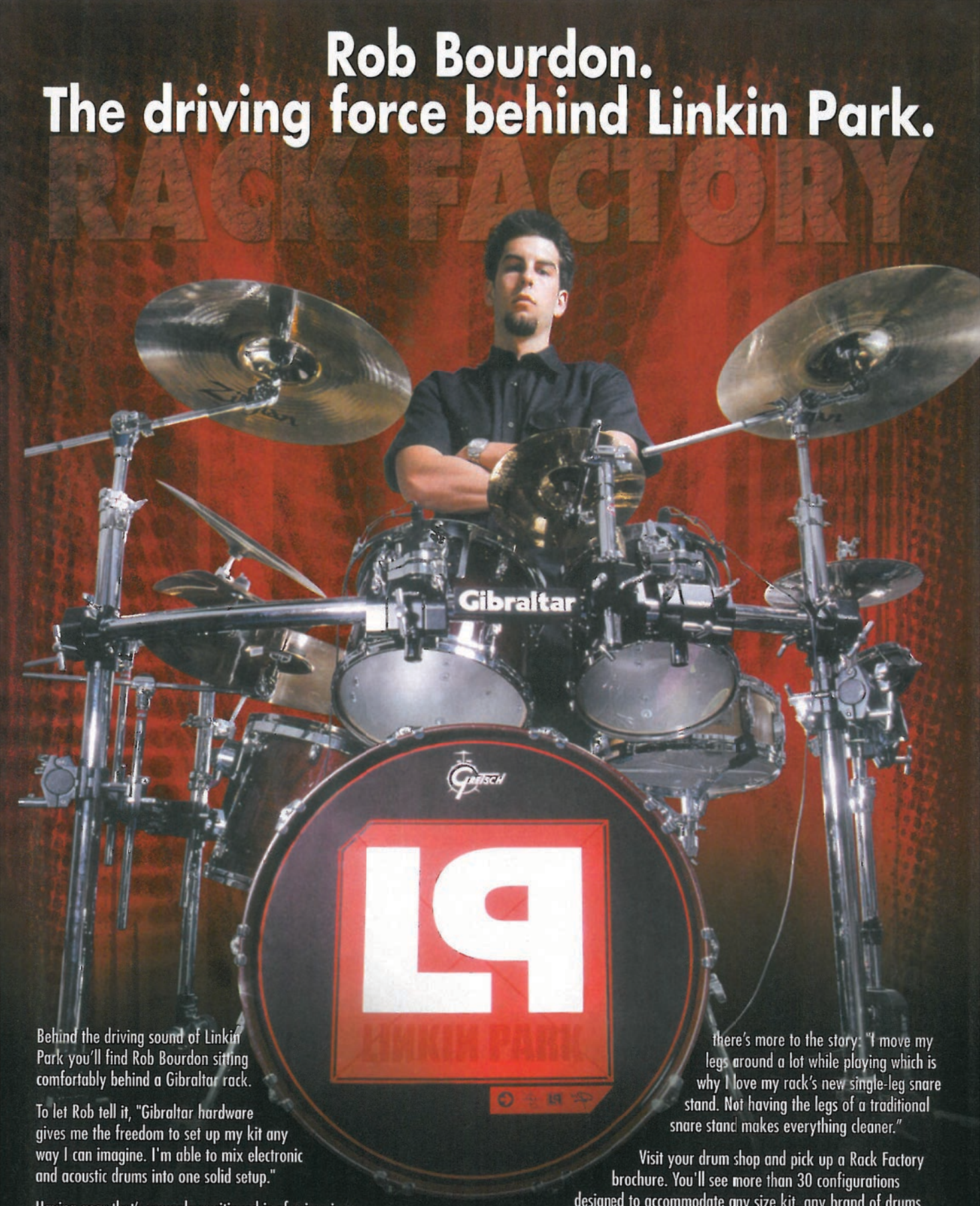

Behind the driving sound of Linkin Park you'll find Rob Bourdon sitting comfortably behind a Gibraltar rack.

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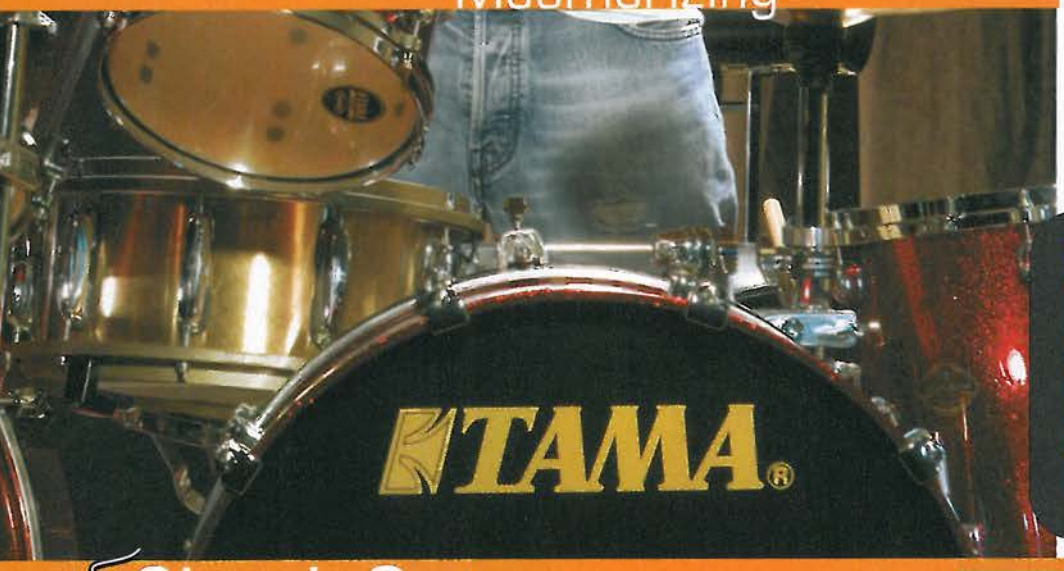

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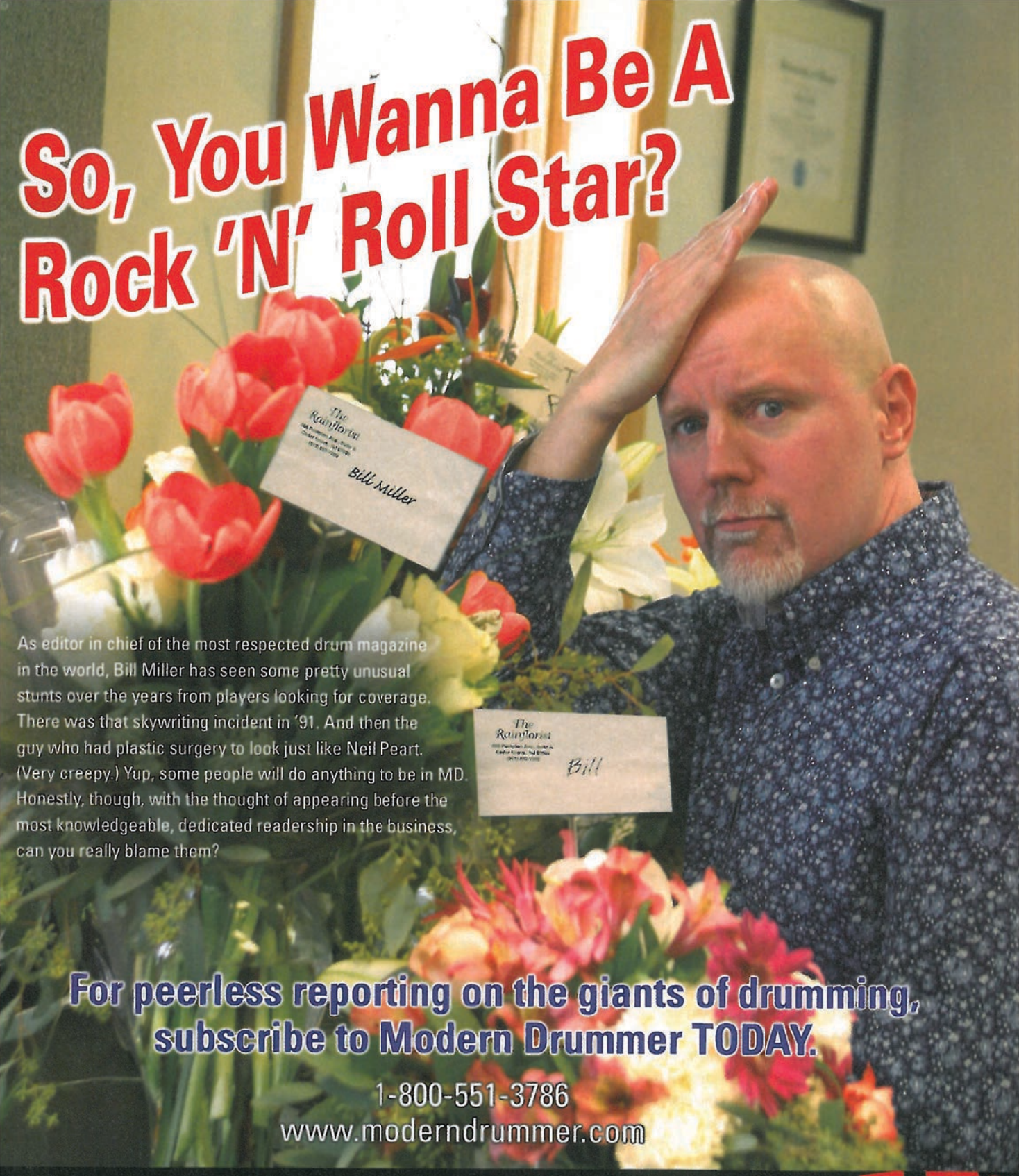

As editor in chief of the most respected drum magazine in the world, Bill Miller has seen some pretty unusual stunts over the years from players looking for coverage. There was that skywriting incident in '91. And then the guy who had plastic surgery to look just like Neil Peart. (Very creepy.) Yup, some people will do anything to be in MD. Honestly, though, with the thought of appearing before the most knowledgeable, dedicated readership in the business, can you really blame them?

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Oh, and who could forget that time the Radio City Rockettes showed up, high-kicking as a young woman played "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida" from the back of a flatbed truck?

A Clear Shot

We generally do the write-up for *Kit Of The Month* descriptions. But this month we thought we'd let the owner/builder of our featured kit do his own talking. He's Dan Shooter, who goes by the professional name of "Capt. Beardy, Interplanetary Rock God."

"As an *MD* subscriber in the early to mid-1980s—when I was a youthful chap—I found great knowledge and pearls of drumming wisdom, especially from my idol at the time, Neil Peart. I must confess, however, to having lost touch with current affairs regarding *MD*. It was only recently that a friend of mine suggested I send you some pictures of a kit I've been putting together for a new band venture, for inclusion in your *Kit Of The Month* segment.

"I personally fabricated quite a few custom parts for the kit. The most obvious are the clear acrylic concert toms, and the suspended 20" gong bass drum, which I pretty much made from scratch, excluding the shell itself. There's a lot more percussion to go with the kit, including three gongs, a timpani, cowbells, temple blocks, a bell tree, a glockenspiel, and chimes. (I just couldn't fit it all into my van at the time these photos were taken.) I created most of the stands and mounts for those items as well.

"All the work was carried out in my little workshop at the end of my garden, where I've got a couple of small lathes and all manner of welding gear.

PHOTO REQUIREMENTS

1. Photos must be high-quality and in color. 35mm slides are preferred; color prints will be considered; Polaroids not accepted. 2. You may send more than one view of the kit. 3. Only show drums, no people. 4. Shoot drums against a neutral background. Avoid "busy" backgrounds. 5. Clearly highlight special attributes of your kit. Send photo(s) to: Kit Of The Month, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1288. Photos cannot be returned.

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